THE OLD CHURCH GALLERY MINSTRELS

An Account of the Church Bands and Singers in England from about 1660 to 1860

Ъу

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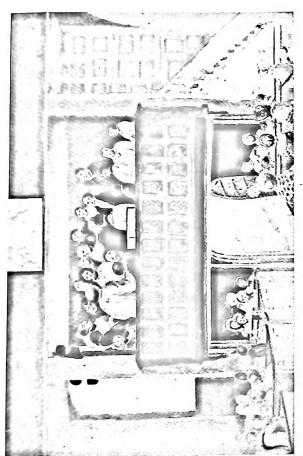


Photo by Lewis Ball, Crawley.

A VILLAGE CHOIR IN THE FORTIES.

From a painting in Ifield Church, Jussex, by May Lewin.

The Old Church Gullery Minstrels.

FOREWORD

GRATEFUL acknowledgements are herewith accorded to (the late) Dr. Harvey Grace, formerly Editor of The Musical Times, who read through the manuscript of this book shortly before his lamented death and made several suggestions; to Canon F. W. Galpin, author of Old English Instruments of Music and other works; the Rev. R. Convers Morrell, M.A., and to Mr. Adam Carse, F.R.A.M., author of Musical Wind Instruments, for some information about their particular subjects; and more especially to Mr. Lyndesay G. Langwill, Edinburgh, an authority on the history and development of the bassoon and double-bassoon, who supplied many details about the bassoon and other instruments, and also read through the manuscript and made valuable comments and corrections. My thanks are also due to many strangers all over England who listened to my talks on the subject of this book, broadcast from the B.B.C. some years ago, and in consequence supplied me with anecdotes and information about the Old Church Gallery Minstrels.

K. H. McD.

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INTRODUCTION

Put the Kalendar back a couple of hundred years and come with me to some village church almost anywhere in England in, say, the year 1740-or in any year between A.D. 1660 and 1860 for that matter. It is a Sunday and the rustic community is slowly gathering for the morning service. Take your seat in that comfortless pew with the hard bench and the unyielding upright back. No, there are no cushions or hassocks, and the floor is of stone, tiles or uneven boards; there is no stove or heating gear, the building is cold and The service will be long, the sermon, if there is one, longer still, and the spoken word will perhaps be as chilly and lifeless as the church. But there will be warmth and life in the gallery behind you, plenty of both, too much sometimes! You will hear a band of keen rural musicians, burning, and sometimes nearly bursting, with whole-hearted zeal for one of their chief delights in life. They are the old Church Gallery Minstrels, the "musickers" or "musicianers," as their neighbours call them.

They are not robed in cassocks or surplices; probably clean smock-frocks are doing duty for the one and brown fustian, kneebreeches and buskins for the other. Simple and homely, rough-shod and heavy-handed, but zealous beyond words, very proud of their performance, though often noisy and unwittingly irreverent

in doing it.

When they begin to play you will do as the other members of the congregation do—turn round to the west with your face to the gallery and your back to the altar, and literally "face the music" till it is finished. You need not try to join in the singing unless you wish; leave the music to those who are deft in the art, they will more

gladly forgive your silence than your attempt to sing.

How came these minstrels into being, you ask? Why was it that for about 200 years nearly every church in England, in towns and villages, at one part of the period or other, had its own band, or a barrel-organ or pitch-pipe as the background for the singing? The "musickers" formed a notable, and certainly noticeable, feature of the services of the Church during those two centuries; they were petty tyrants in matters musical in their homely worship, feared and respected to a large extent by parson and people alike.

The main cause of their being was the insertion of the single word "organs" in an Order of Council issued in 1644. The Order is as

follows :---

(Title page)

"Two Ordinances of the Lords and Commons in Parliament for the speedy Demolishing of all Organs, Images and all manner of Super-

stitious Monuments in Cathedrall, Parish Churches and Chappells, throughout the Kingdom of England and Dominion of Wales: the better to accomplish the blessed Reformation so happily begun, and to remove all offences and things illegal in the Worship of God.

Die Jovis, 9 Maii 1644.

Ordered by the Lords in Parliament Assembled that these Ordinances shall be forthwith printed and published, Jo. Brown Cler. Parliamentorum.

Printed for John Wright in the Old baily, May 11. 1644."

(On pages 3 and 4) :--

"The Lords and Commons assembled in Parliament, the better to accomplish the blessed Reformation so happily begun, and to remove offences and things illegall in the worship of God, do ordaine that all representations of the Trinity, or of any Angell or Saint in or about Any Cathedrall, Collegiate, or Parish Church or Chappell or in any open place within this Kingdom shall be taken away, defaced and utterly demolished. . . . And that all Organs and the frames or cases wherein they stand in all Churches and Chappells aforesaid shall be taken away, and utterly defaced, and none other hereafter set up in their places. And that all Copes, Surplices, superstitious Vestments, Roods and Fonts aforesaid be likewise utterly defaced, Whereunto all persons within this Kingdome whom it may concerne are hereby required at their perill, to yield due obedience."

(Here follow some exceptions such as memorials to the dead.)

As it was not easy to "demolish" stone fonts many of them were turned out and left derelict in the churchyard, or farmer-churchwardens took them away and used them as water-troughs in the byre; stone altars and marble monuments made useful door-steps or building materials. But organs were more easily got out of the way; a few were sold to private persons, some were removed to parsonage houses to prevent their destruction, but most of them provided a welcome supply of firewood to the cottager and a useful stock of metal to the tinsmith.

Thus it came about that when Charles II was restored to the throne in 1660 most of the churches were bereft of musical instruments; congregations either had to say the Psalms and Canticles or sing them without accompaniment until such time as they could obtain other instruments for the purpose. This book is a simple account of some of the instruments that were used at one time or other in England and of the homely folk who played them, with a description of many of their tune-books, both printed and hand-

written.

It seems strange that almost every branch of old Church life from 1660 to 1860, from episcopal visitations to "church ales," from parsons to parish clerks, and nearly every kind of ecclesiastical art, from fonts to old brasses, from carving to tapestry, has been fully treated in some work or other; but the one art that appealed more

than all the others to the minds of the old-time congregations, and in which they took the greatest interest, viz. Music, has been greatly neglected in literature. Very few of the many local histories of churches have any reference to music at all, and you may often search in vain in the volumes of archæological societies issued during the nineteenth century for any papers on the subject. Unfortunately, moreover, the two main sources from which one can draw any information about this topic, and to which I have constantly turned in my researches during the last forty years, are gradually disappearing for ever. These two sources are, first, the Old Inhabitants whose fathers and grandfathers performed and often composed the music they played; and, second, the well-thumbed and dog-eared Volumes of Music, both printed and manuscript, which were the treasured possessions of those bygone enthusiasts. And time is relentlessly calling away the one class, while the kitchen fire is too frequently the finale of the other.

In fiction Thomas Hardy has given a delightful story of the old Mellstock Quire in Under the Greenwood Tree, and in recent years a few writers of local history have turned their attention to this branch, but much has been lost to the literature about village life

that might have filled many volumes.

In treating of the subject I have divided the matter into the three heads—the Minstrels, the Instruments, the Music. Under the first I have very largely let the old "musickers" tell their tale themselves.

But before proceeding with the story it is but fair to state that the doom of the mediæval organs was not due to any Puritan objection to music; rather it was owing to their proper dislike of the somewhat frivolous style of playing and singing that had grown up in the early part of the seventeenth century, both in and outside the churches. Writing in 1633 Prynne stated that "Musicke now-a-days has growne to such and so great licentiousness that even at the ministration of the Holy Sacrament all kinds of wanton and lewde trifling, with piping of Organs have their place and course. As for the Divine Service and Common-prayer it is so chaunted and misused and mangled that it may justly seeme not to be a noyse made of men, but rather a

bleating of bruite beasts."

In his learned book The Puritans and Music (1934) Dr. Percy Scholes proved beyond question that the Puritans, including Cromwell himself, loved music, many of them being very good players and singers. He quotes numerous writers of the period and shows clearly that the Puritans only disliked the rubbish that was called music and the way in which it was performed—just as many of us to-day dislike jazz. Cromwell was a lover of choral song, he possessed an organ and employed a private organist; and when one of his daughters was married he engaged an orchestra of forty-eight players. Milton was the son of a cultivated musician and was himself an amateur organist. Bunyan in prison made a flute out of a chair-leg and in Pilgrim's Progress all the good people sing and dance.

When Charles II came back to the throne he brought in a taste for instrumental accompaniment. Pepps states in his *Diary* that Charles introduced twenty-four violins into the chapel at Whitehall in 1662, and a reference to this event is made by Evelyn, who adds that the violins were used instead of the "grave and solemn wind music accompanying [played on] the organ." This act of the king no doubt helped to encourage the formation of the village and town church bands throughout the country.

A delightful description of a Sunday service in a country village is

given by William Howett in Rural Life of England, 1838:-

"Entering one of the village churches in some retired district on a Sunday, you seem to step back into a past age. The simple congregation all in their best attire, in cut and texture guiltless of modern fashion, the old clerk with his long coat, and long hair combed over his shoulders, doling out his responses with a peculiar twang. Then the little music-loft with its musicians, consisting of a bass-viol, a bassoon and hautboy, and the whole congregation singing with all their heart and soul. These are remnants of antiquity that are nowhere else to be found. The Clerk always reads 'Cheberims and Sepherims' and most unequivocally 'I am a lion [alien] to my mother's children.'"

Many whose memory harks back to the services of eighty or ninety years ago would be glad to have again the homely simplicity of those days, both in the churches and outside them. But as will be seen in the pages ensuing there was much room for a better state of things musical in the places where the "kneeling hamlet"

gathered together.

The story herein told mainly refers to village churches; but the towns also had their bands of minstrels, whose ways were naturally a little less primitive than those of their country brethren.

CHAPTER I

THE MINSTRELS

"No, there warn't no organ in them days. Don't suppose we ever had one in the old church; we had a band, up in the gallery over the big door. Rickety old stairs up to it and dark, too. Let's see, there was Jim Comber, the Clurk, he played the flewte; Steve, the cobbler, he played clar'net, and old Tomsett, 'Grimy Tom' we called him, he were a blacksmith, he scraped away on the gran'-mother fiddle, the bass-viol, y'know. An' they could play too; tarrible fine playin' 'twas, I rackon. I was on'y a little chap at the time, over eighty year ago, and me and my brother Tom were allowed to sit in the gallery 'cos we could sing. Us boys sung seconds and if we didn't just sing out, Old Jim 'ud crack us over the head wi' his flewte. There wur two or three fiddles, too, and a horse's leg—that's what we called the bassoon."

It was an old Sussex "musicianer" who was speaking, a patriarch of nearly ninety years of age, telling of his early reminiscences, and unveiling to me an aspect of church life of which at the time I was entirely ignorant. That was over fifty years ago, and as the old man was a willing and genial talker, and I was an eager listener, the story went on at some length with no interruption on my part beyond an

occasional question.

"We sat up in the gallery and I used to count the winders doorin' the sarmon, whilst Cobbler wiped his clar'net dry wi' a big red han'kerchief, and the Smith he tooned his big fiddle. No, the passon didn't mind 'bout that; he jest kep' on a-preachin' and preachin', and when he'd done one hour he wiped his spartacles and turned the hour-glass tother way up and went on agin. long sarmons in them days, they was ! No, there warn't many books then; the clurk he had a printed book and the singers and minstrels wrote their own books. Here's one my feyther used, writ all by hisself. Yes, good writin' 'tis, they knew how to write then, as well as sing. Which is the melerdy? Oh! the air you mean; there Yes, the tenor allus sung the air, not the trebles; us boys on'y sung seconds as I was a-telling on ye afore. An' when we sung out too loud, the men they glared at us and told us we was a groutheaded set o' chaps. Hymn-books? No, we didn't have no hymns; leastways, on'y the Marnin' Hymn and one for Easter and Chris'mas Day. We sung the Old Varsion of the Psalms, or sometimes the Noo Varsion, any on 'em we liked and anywhen we liked, too. No, vicar, he didn't care what we sung and told us to bawl out what we pleased, s'longs we didn't bother him!"

Much more in the same strain was told me by my old friend, and by many others both in Sussex and in other parts of England.

Often we English folk are accused of being un-musical, but those who make that charge have no knowledge of the history of our villages. Even if one forgets the outstanding musicians of Elizabeth's reign, and such as Purcell and Arne in the succeeding centuries, there is abundant evidence in the story of the Old Gallery Minstrels that there were keen musicians in nearly every village and town in England. They were not brilliant performers or composers, perhaps, but they loved music, and when they trudged through dusty lanes or muddy roads, in wet or fine, Sunday after Sunday, to worship at their beloved church, the duty of worship was often forgotten in

the joy of singing or playing.

Thus it came to pass that, when most of the small portable or positive mediæval organs had been "demolished," the villagers formed bands of musical instruments and praised God with strings and pipe. The bands came into being soon after the Restoration and throve with variable fortune for about 200 years. Usually there were from three to eight players, half of whom played on stringed and the others on wood-wind instruments, with here and there brass-wind as well. Rarely some church would have a dozen or more minstrels; in that case the players were shyly unwilling to perform unless a fitting number were present to keep up their

good name.

Early last century the band at Farnborough (Hampshire) was plainly zealous to uphold its fame. A certain Mr. Brown was choirmaster, and the parish clerk, who sat in state in his black gown at the bottom of the "three-decker," bore the sweet-sounding name of Larkaby. When the parson got to the end of the third Collect, Mr. Larkaby would stand up and put the question to the bandmaster in the gallery, with his hand to his mouth to make it more impressive, "Any singing to-day, Mr. Brown?" The latter would turn round and look at his band, and reply, "No, Mr. Larkaby, bain't hands enough "; or, if there were six or seven players, "Yes, Mr. Larkaby!" Then the clerk would turn his eyes towards the parson in the reading-desk above him and say, "You can goo on !" and a psalm or hymn would be given out and sung.

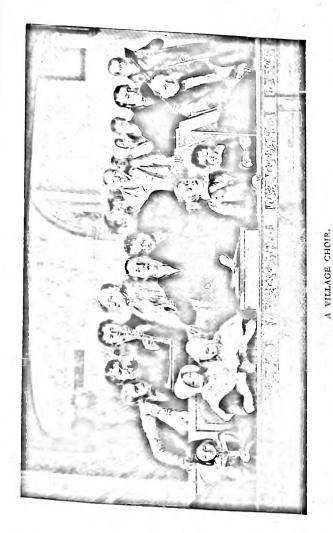
On one of these occasions when the question was put to Mr. Brown, on looking round he said "Yes" to there being hands enough, but added in despair, "but I have lost my toon-book!" Then, pointing into the body of the church below, he cried, "There un lies!" Mr. Larkaby left his desk and marched down the nave, seized a book and holding it up said, "Be thickee?" To which the bandmaster replied, "E be. Chuck un up!" And the book was tossed up to the gallery, whilst Mr. Larkaby went back to his



THE COUNTRY CHORISTERS, 18TH CENTURY.

From a drawing by I. Collet.

[To face p. 6.



From the painting by Thomas Webster, R.-A., in the Victoria and Albert Museum. Painted in Bow Brickbill Church, and exhibited at the Royal Academy. 1847.

{To face p. 7.

esk, muttering, "Well caught!" and told the parson he could go

n and give out the psalm.

The "musickers" were autocrats of the gallery and largely of the hurch, too, and the parson had to walk warily in dealing with hem. If he tried to be too masterful, even in the conducting of the ervices, he would find a sturdy resistance that could hardly be vercome.

Many years ago the two parishes of Aldingbourne and Oving. in Sussex, were held jointly by one incumbent, who took the morning service in one church and the afternoon at the other alternately; it was customary to have no preaching in the morning. certain occasion a newly appointed vicar expressed his intention of introducing a sermon at Matins, and he informed the choir of the proposed innovation beforehand. But the sturdy Aldingbourne singers would have "none o' his new-fangled goings on; they'd never 'eeard on such a thing afore and didn't see no sense to it, like." They, therefore, resolved to defeat the vicar's well-meant intention.

Knowing that there was never much time to spare for the parson to have his lunch and make the journey to Oving between the two services, on the first Sunday that he went into the pulpit to preach they started singing the 119th Psalm, and refused to stop when the would-be preacher wished. In vain the vicar looked up at the gallery and held up his written discourse, in vain he coughed and hum'd and ha'd; the singers would look at nothing but their "Old Version." Verse after verse they bawled out, lustily and slowly, till at last the vicar's patience and time were completely exhausted; he had to climb down, literally and metaphorically, and leave the church without delivering a discourse at all !

Sermons were no doubt fit and proper on "festical" occasions, but if they were preached when custom forbade and the singing ran a risk of being curtailed thereby, then it was only just that the

singers should literally stand up for their rights.

A Norfolk parish priest wrote a diary for the years 1758 to 1802; he was James Woodforde, incumbent of Weston. His references to the music of the church are not many, but some of them contain a hidden and suggestive meaning in their brevity. Thus: "1793 April 23. No singing this afternoon. The Weston singers talk of giving it up." But a fortnight later, "The Singers took it into their heads to sing again." One wonders what caused this strike and it is a pity that Parson Woodforde did not enlighten us. Anyhow, the autocrats of the gallery resumed their duties with good will, for they are commended highly for their singing in other parts of the diary.

Very proud, too, were the "musickers" of themselves and their performances, and it was quite a common boast either that the choir or band was the best in the neighbourhood, or that at least it had one

of the finest voices in the country.

Wadhurst was stated to have two of the best and most powerful voices in England, a tenor and a bass. Donnington, a tiny village near Chichester, claimed that its singing was the best of any village church in the county; but that claim was ignored by Hellingly (also in Sussex), who had the best choir in the neighbourhood!

Another loyal old "musicker" asserted that "clever players and fine voices abounded in the Weald." In another church the "musical services were above the average of country churches for

many years."

At Courteenhall, Northants, early in the nineteenth century, the minister remonstrated with a member of the choir for using trombones, bugles, etc., for the church band, and asked them to make less noise. The offended singer replied, "Well, sir, I've heard many quires, and I've heard quires and organs in cathedrals, but I think they are no-ways to be compared to our band and quire!"

On one occasion the conductor of the band at the end of an anthem was so delighted with the rendering of it that he struck his baton sharply on the gallery and shouted out, "Well done, lads!"

This pride in their performances was pardonable, and it had the good result that they were always keen to do well, to vie with each other and with other churches in the outcome of their painstaking efforts.

The "musickers" were often ignorant, sometimes without musical talent, frequently poor executants and generally somewhat irreverent; but they were always full of zeal in matters musical. They practised singing several nights a week at home or in the church; or they learned their instruments slowly and laboriously, often without any tuition save that afforded by an instruction book or a fellow player, devoting most of their spare time to this one and only hobby; or they spent hours of painstaking labour in the writing of volumes of manuscript music.

In a letter of reminiscences written in 1934, Mr. O. F. Wainwright of Belton, Lincolnshire, stated that his earliest musical recollections were of the band of over a dozen instruments, with a choir of twenty or more at Rushton Church, Northants—the best village choir in the neighbourhood. This was in 1851, and he remembered that on every Sunday evening, when there was no service (Evensong having been in the afternoon), "one would hear in every cottage instrumental or vocal music blending in family harmony. There were old enthusiasts who tramped on foot twenty miles or more across country for a musical sing-song."

Perhaps some of our forefathers devoted more time than they should to their beloved art, but it is certainly a sad result of the boundless circuit of modern mental activities that the old-time enthusiasm for one definite pursuit, especially that of the church

musician, is now very nearly extinct.

About a hundred years ago one of the members of the band of

Lindfield Church, a farmer-named Coppard, was so energetic with his music and spent so much time in practising the violin that his son refused to learn to play any instrument whatever; and when he was asked the reason why he would not follow in his father's steps, he stated that he was afraid that music would take up so many hours that

his farm would be neglected in consequence.

It was well, perhaps, that the old choirmen were satisfied as a rule with their own performances, for very few writers on the subject of church music in the past ever had much praise for them, and scathing criticisms of both the singing and playing are frequent in the books of the period in reference to England in general. Thomas Mace in Music's Monument (1676), in allusion to the psalm-singing of the day, says, "It is sad to hear what whining, yelling and screeching there is in many congregations, as if the people were affrighted or distracted."

Most of the prefaces or introductions to the numerous psalmtune books issued during the eighteenth century contain adverse criticisms of the way in which the Psalms were rendered at the time; and the compilers of such books (as will be seen from the extracts given later on) nearly always declared that the object of their works

was to improve the musical portions of the church services.

There is certainly plenty of evidence to bear out some of the adverse opinions expressed in these books. Bishop Oxenden in his Autobiography related that "the singing was almost ludicrous [at Barham in 1833], provoking laughter rather than expressing praise." . . . "The screaming treble of the children and the rude bass of the men were agonising to his sensitive ears," said Mr. Braham, son of the famous singer.

The vicar of West Tarring was one who stated that "his taste was outraged and dignity offended," but he expressed himself less harshly than did Dr. Burton, who in his Journal (1750) wrote in

reference to church psalmody at Shermanbury :-

"The more shrill-toned they [the Sussex people] may be, the more valued they are, and in Church they sing Psalms, by preference, not set to the old and simple tunes, but as if in a tragic chorus, changing about in strophe and anti-strophe, and stanzas with good measure; but yet there is something offensive to my ear when they bellow to excess and bleat out some goatish noise with all their might."

The last remark was probably true of most of the old country choirs, to whom the term *piano* had little meaning and for whom *pianissimo* most certainly never existed. The choir at Willingdon in the middle of last century consisted of "a lot of young men who

sang, or bawled, unaccompanied."

In the Parish Register of Buxted occurs the following quaint

entry :--

"The old Clerk of this Parish, who had continued in the office of Clerke and Sexton for the space of forty-three years, whose melody warbled forth as if he had been thumped on the back by a stone, was buried 20th September, 1666."

A reference to the singing at Twineham early last century:-

"The bandsmen and choirmen were of the peasant class; they assembled occasionally in each others cottages for a practice. Some of them were quite unable to read, and had learnt the Anthems from hearing them sung by others; and the result must have been more interesting than edifying."

There can be little doubt that the singing in olden days was more lusty than refined, more original than artistic, more vigorous than tuneful; but the whole-hearted efforts of the devoted musicians largely made up for a lack of knowledge and skill. There was a simple directness about their voluntary labours which makes one regret the bygone days.

Even the choirmasters themselves were not always satisfied, for one Sunday, a hundred years ago, at Danehill, the leader called out in the middle of a service, "There's someone singing pretty much

out of tune down there; I think it's you, Jim!"

The faults of the old choirs were not altogether to be blamed, for they received very little help or encouragement from the clergy, who seldom seem to have taken any interest at all in the music of the services.

J. A. La Trobe in The Music of the Church (1831) expresses himself

trongly concerning the attitude of the clergy of his day:-

"It were vain to endeavour to cloak the indifference with which they generally regard this part of their duty, to superintend, regulate and inspirit the music of the church. In most places the choir are left to their own fitful struggles, without any offer of clerical assistance. Occasionally, a native admiration of the art, a vague sense of obligation, a fondness for power, or a spirit of interference, operating severally or collectively, may arouse to exertion. But obstacles arise at every step, taste is outraged, dignity is offended, zeal is soon stumbled, and the attempt to regulate [the music] is abandoned as hopeless. . . . It is to be feared, that in most parishes no other kind of attention [than that of wanton interference by the parson] is even imagined as obligatory on the part of the minister. To this almost general neglect may be mainly attributed the present infirm state of sacred music throughout the kingdom."

La Trobe described the attitude of the parson towards the singing at the time when he was about to preach, when he went into the vestry to doff his surplice and don the black gown for the sermon:—

"The solemn liturgy is concluded. After a moment's silent prayer, all rise from their knees, their minds prepared for the cheering invitation, 'Let us sing to the praise and glory of God.' The psalm is given out. The singers elbow themselves into notice, and the tune advances. Verse follows verse—but he appointed to lead the public devotions is no longer in his place in the house of

God. At last the vestry door opens, the eyes of the people follow him up the aisle, and are hardly recalled to their duty, till he has ascended the pulpit. Hitherto he has rather disturbed than countenanced this portion of the service. After a moment's pause: a few lines perhaps remain, during the singing of which, as a last redeeming effort, he may yet encourage by the sound of his voice or the movement of his lips, the hallowed exercise of praise. No, it is time that he has to spare—and looking once round upon the congregation, he sits back upon his seat, there reposing till the wearisome duty is performed."

La Trobe's remarks no doubt applied fitly to most of the clergy in former days; and I have not gathered much evidence to contravene the charge. The zeal for church music, the management of the choir and band, the provision of music and instruments, the conduct of practices and the general maintenance of the singing, seems to have been confined to the singers and players themselves. The clergy posed as critics, rather than helpmates; and the con-

gregations too often followed suit.

This was much to be deplored, for the musicians took an immense amount of trouble to become worthy to take their places in the honourable seats of the mighty in the gallery. The simple-minded enthusiasts would toil on foot over the long wheel-marked, rutty roads, winter and summer, carrying their weighty instruments on week-days to practise, or on Sundays to play in churches utterly devoid of warmth or comfort, in the presence of a too-often somnolent congregation, and a droning parson who almost turned a deaf ear to their humble praise.

It was a not uncommon custom for the choirs and bands to visit adjacent churches and "lend a hand" on special occasions, leaving their own gallery empty and mute. What the clergy said about these choral excursions has not been recorded so far as I know, but perhaps they were sometimes glad, though otherwhiles sad, at being deprived of their singers and players. The custom no doubt had the advantage of begetting a friendly rivalry among the musicians which would quicken them to fresh efforts when occupying their

own seats once more.

The youthful ambition of villagers to be church minstrels was widespread, and many a young fellow, who had had little "schooling," would learn some instrument with unflagging earnestness and laboriously copy out his music, the cost of printed books being far beyond the reach of his slender means. It was often the custom for whole families for generations to serve in the choir or band; any member of a household who failed to try to take part was regarded almost as an outcast. One family at Bosham supplied members to the choir without a break for ninety years, and another for over a century. In one village in Sussex the band was formed of twelve brothers. (They had families in those days!)

Many individual members, too, had a very lengthy tenure of office; it was quite common for them to be able to claim forty or fifty years service to their credit. At one time the Bosham choir of twelve adult singers had an average of over forty years continuous membership for all of them, the smaller number of years' service of the juniors being made up by the longer terms of the seniors.

One George Marshall, of Rogate, played different instruments in the church for sixty-five years—flute, barrel-organ, harmonium, and, finally, a modern organ, retiring when nearly eighty years old.

George Arnold, familiarly known as "Grandsire," sang in the Bosham choirforeighty-two years, from 1829 to 1911—surely are cord!

Whatever blemishes there were in their performances these old minstrels were worthy of all praise for their perseverance and willing efforts, shown in various ways. Besides their diligence in practising and their drudgery in copying music, many of them learned two or more instruments.

A famous character in and around Henfield in the fifties of the last century was one Pennicott (or Penniket), whose performances on both clarinet and trombone were noted. A humorous sketch of him in Woodmancote Church was made by the late Mr. H. Smith, of Henfield, in which Mr. Pennicott is depicted playing the clarinet for the anthem, "Awake, thou that sleepest," thus disturbing the

slumbers of the nodding congregation.

There can be little doubt that the ardour of our forefathers as regards the music of the Sunday services kept alive a great deal of native musical talent in England that would otherwise have been dormant; and it is a misfortune in some respects that the professional performers and mechanised music are now so much more available, even in remote villages, than they used to be. Many who might have become singers or players themselves are now content to do nothing but listen; and some are fallen so low that music has to be accompanied by moving pictures to make any appeal to their debased minds at all.

The praise on the one hand, usually by the minstrels themselves, for their performances, and the contempt for them often shown by the congregations and writers of the period were neither wholly deserved. Both parties were more or less biased; there can be little doubt that much of the music of the churches was highly creditable, and at any rate greatly enjoyed by the rural listeners. The village performers were indeed fond of music in their services and always desired it very earnestly.

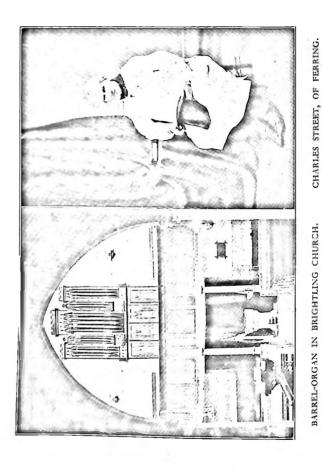
This desire has often shown itself in ways that evoke a smile nowadays. In the middle of the nineteenth century the people of Westhampnett "counted it an enviable privilege to go to Oving Church to hear the barrel-organ there." At another church crowds assembled to hear the new instrument called the "harmonium"! At Egdean the congregation used to sit and sing psalms by them-



JOHN PENNICOTT PLAYING THE CLARINET IN WOODMANCOTE CHURCH, 1850.

From photo of original sketch, by T. Smart, Steyning.

[To face p. 12.



[To face p. 13.

selves while they waited before the service for the coming of the parson. On one occasion a new "minister" arrived at the church and found the congregation singing away lustily; he waited till they had finished and then exclaimed—"I see you are all having a

jollification without pipe or pot l "

The old-time zeal for music sometimes made discretion a laggard. The eagerness on the part of the Mayfield choir, not only to sing, but to choose their music as well, led to an unseemly incident on one occasion. "The clerk, who was the chief musician, and the singers were at variance as to the tunes to be used. Before any musical portion of the service he left his seat below the pulpit and ascended to the gallery to play the accompaniments. So strained were the relations between himself and the singers that on one particular Sunday, when he played his chosen tune, dead silence prevailed among them; if they could not sing as they wished they would not sing at all. The following Sunday instead of mounting the stairs he stood below the gallery and called up to them, 'Be ye agoing to sing to-day or bain't ye? Because if ye bain't agoing to sing I bain't agoing to play!"

The minstrels usually performed in the gallery at the west end of the church. The charming picture entitled A Village Choir, painted in 1846, by T. Webster, R.A., now in the Victoria and Albert Museum, depicts a gallery scene in former days. There are the singers, men in smocks or broad-cloth, girls in poke-bonnets; among them are the players of the clarinet, bassoon and "bass-viol," while the conductor, or leader, is at the desk in front beating time with his hand.

At Lamberhurst, Kent, the minstrels' gallery is still in existence, and on the front of it are two upright grooved iron holders for the book-rest or music-stand of the conductor. They slope outwards, towards the nave, showing that the conductor stood with his back to the band, facing the congregation as shown in Webster's picture.

In England the conductor of the band was usually called the "Leader," and so far I have not heard of him under any other title, but in Scotland, in the Free Churches, he was variously entitled Precentor, Uptaker of the Psalme, Maister of the Sang Scule, Musitioner, or Lettergae. The latter curious word is derieved from "let go" (gae), which was the direction given by the Precentor to start the psalm. The choirs very often practised the tunes to doggerel rhymes, instead of to the verses of the Psalms themselves, so as to avoid the sacrilege of using sacred words merely for practice. One favourite "shanty", as it might be called, was:—

"Come let us sing the tune of 'French,'
The second measure low
The third ascendeth very high,
The fourth doth downward go."

When there was no gallery the musicians performed in some convenient place in the nave; they rarely seem to have occupied the chancel. At Selsey they stood in the front pew, and had a high desk attached to the front of the pew for their music; the notches and screw-holes where the iron arms supporting the desk were fastened may still be seen in the woodwork of the pew (which is now the fifth one on the north side of the nave). At Boxgrove the band for a time stood round the pulpit; but when the gallery was available they migrated to the loftier position. The then Duke of Richmond related in 1912 that he remembered hearing the band in his boyhood's days, and that as soon as the minstrels commenced to play, the whole congregation turned round and faced the gallery, and remained in that attitude until the singing ceased. An old man writing to me in 1934 related that he could recall the Lychett Matravers barrel-organ in 1859, and that as a child he stood up on the seat of a high-backed pew so that he, along with the other members of the congregation, could turn towards the gallery, as soon as the sexton began to "grind" the organ. (See Frontispiece.)

The privilege of occupying a seat in the gallery was most jealously guarded, and ordinary non-musical members of the congregation were not allowed "up among the gods." Extracts from the Cuckfield Book, a chronicle of the parish for the past three centuries,

give evidence of this, for in 1699 occur the following:-

"Rules agreed on by the Vicar and divers of the chief of the Parishioners and other persons that contributed to the Building of the New Gallery for

singing Psalms for ye better order of those that sitt and sing in it.

Imp: [Imprimis] This Gallery being built only for ye singing of Psalms by those yt have learnt, and for their singing ym together, therefore tis agreed that it be used by such only (and those allowed to be Good or Competent Singers by ye major part of the Quire) and by no other,

tho' Proprietor, till approved Singers.

2. That Timothy Burrell, Esq. (who gave 2£ 005 00d) Wm. Board, Esq. (who gave £3) Rob. Middleton, Vicar (who gave both for work and materials), and for ye Faculty from the Bishop at least 4£i... [and others]... have the five or six inner places in the Front seate on the right hand for ye Principall Bass, if they be singers, and according to their Rank. And that the two outer places be for Tenours wch two at present are Samuel Savage, Yeoman, (who gave 01£i 105) and Charles Savage, Yeoman, his Brother (who also gave 01£i 105.)

[Rules 3 to 8 contain instructions for the seating of everyone according to rank, the "inferiour proprieters" to go into the "next best places" and the women and maid-servants to yield place to their "Betters."]

9. Since ye Singers are a running body and sometimes a family of ye Proprieters may have more or less, or none that can sing well, and since if they all had a competent number of Singers there would not be enough places for ym... they must take their lott without murmuring.

[Rules 10 to 14 contain instructions for Proprieters, the Clerk, for

disposal of seat at death, and as to behaviour of juveniles.]

15. That as ye Bishop enjoyns in his Faculty divers of the Singers . . . disperse themselves in the congregation . . . to assist others to sing.

[Rules 16 to 18 refer to disputes, safekeeping of this book, etc.]

Signatures :—Tim Burrell,

Will Board, Rob. Middleton, Vicar, (and 19 others).

"The gallery at Barham, Kent, was known as The Singing Loft, and in 1833 the choir, consisting mainly of a band of school-children, were in one part of it, while the front row was reserved for the village musicians. Any kind of instrument was deemed to be admissible in the Band." (The Parish Church of Barham, by Rev. W. T. Mallorie.) Perhaps the children were kept in the background to prevent misbehaviour such as occurred in Exeter Cathedral in the 'sixties of last century, for there the choristers indulged in the little pleasantry of throwing nuts and orange-peel on to the heads of the congregation. This led to the disuse of the minstrels' gallery.

The galleries were built specially for the musicians, as a rule, and a faculty for their erection was granted by the Archbishop of Canterbury. The earliest one of which we have record is at Worth

Church, dated 1640.

In An Old Wealdon Village (1903), by Miss E. Bell-Irving, the author gives an extract from the Archbishop's Faculty for the

Erection of the Minstrels' Gallery in 1731:-

"Whereas Rob. Hooper, Vicar and the principal inhabitants of the said parish are desirous to promote the singing of the Psalms in the said Church to the honour of Almighty God in the most decent and orderly manner, and do judge that a gallery . . . will be convenient to answer to that end. . . We have granted licence and authority to erect . . . a gallery for the sole use of such persons who shall sing Psalms skilfully and well. . . And we further order that some of the singers doe sometimes disperse themselves into the body of the Church for the direction and assistance of such persons as shall have a pious intention of learning to sing."

The privilege of sitting in the minstrels' gallery was obviously reserved for the few; and apparently the singers were encouraged to regard themselves as among the elect in the musical portions of the service, at whose feet the ordinary members of the congregation

had to sit and humbly learn.

The manners and customs of the old singers were often delight-

fully simple and primitive, especially in the matter of dress:-

"I have try'd to remember the Old Choir at Climping where we liv'd many years and generations before us, in our early childhood we attend'd our dear Old Church and can remember the Blacksmith and his Son playing the Violins and the Churchwarden the Bassviol and two others the Shoemakers play'd a flute each they all wore White Smock-frock and carried their Instruments and manuscript

Music in a Red Handkerchief, but none of these Old relics can be found."

The smock-frock was a very sensible and useful garment and its disuse is a sign of the foolish craving for modernity on the part of our country-folk, who would be much happier and more picturesque if they clung more closely to many of the old fashions. The choirmen in their white smocks were far more in keeping with the grey old English churches than are their cassocked and surpliced successors of to-day.

In Brightling Church, about 1820, the male members of the choir wore smock-frocks, buckskin breeches and yellow stockings; and the women wore red cloaks. What could be more picturesque? And the white straw poke-bonnets, trimmed with cambric, with pink and white print dresses and capes worn by the girls of an old choir must have been becoming if not exactly ecclesiastical vestments.

In a letter addressed to the author in 1934 the writer said that she was in a village church about eighty years ago when the choir-boys appeared for the first time in surplices. An old man in the congregation was so upset by this innovation that he shouted out—"Good gracious! What is it coming to? They have all got their

night-shirts on!"

The old minstrels were seldom paid for their services, nor, indeed, do many adult members of choirs at this time receive any remuneration. An annual "outing" is usually the only practical return made to them for their zealous efforts. The parish clerk was sometimes paid fir a year for "grinding" the barrel-organ. At Gnossal, Staffordshire, the vestry passed a resolution in 1775 authorising the expenditure of £5 " to keep up Psalm-singing in the Parish Church"; in 1771 and 1773 at the village friendly society's festival money was spent on "Musick, and on Ale for the Clergy and the Musick." The latter item was probably a customary outlay, ale being the common drink of everyone. In the churchwardens' accounts of Caddington, Bedfordshire, in 1779, occurs, "Paid for Beear gave to ye Lutton Psalm Singers, 5s at Goodyer 2s 6d at Patman." These were visiting singers from Luton; Goodyer and Patman were the inn-keepers. A player on the bassoon at St. Giles, Northampton, was paid half-a-guinea a year in 1790, but this was raised to a guinea in 1799. In 1762 the sum of £1 55. 6d. was paid at Hailsham, "for peoples learning to sing in the church."

Not many children seem to have been employed in the old choirs, probably partly because the melodies of the hymn-tunes were sung by the tenor voices down to about 1850, the treble part being rendered by women. When boys were employed the methods adopted by their seniors to make them behave properly were effective if not exactly reverent; the flute-player would correct an

urchin by whacking him on the head with his flute.

In Kipling's Sussex, by R. Thurston Hopkins, an amusing re-

miniscence of the late Rev. J. C. Egerton, formerly rector of

Burwash, is given :---

"At the Bell Inn I met the sexton. . . . He was very communicative and recollected the days when the Rev. J. Egerton played the fiddle at the choir practices back in 1870. 'He had a hem o' trouble with the boys,' the old man drawled, 'and the only way he could make 'em behave reasonable like was to crack 'em on the head with his fiddle-stick. He was old-fashioned, no bounds, was the old rector.'"

Many of the choirmen themselves were quite irreverent in the older days, and their leaders often corrected them with outspoken and very audible rebukes. One village choir-master was often annoyed because the men sometimes sang bass or tenor, or the melody of a tune indiscriminately. His exasperation reached such a pitch on one occasion that he called out just before a psalm—"If you want to sing bass, sing bass; if you want to sing tenor, sing

tenor; but don't let us have none of your shandy-gaff!"

At Hayes, Middlesex, the parish register records in 1749 that the "Company of Singers by consent of the Ordinary were forbidden to sing any more by the Minister upon account of their frequent ill-behaviour in the Chancel" (the gallery had been closed to them). This led to frequent disputes, and in March the aggrieved "singers and other inhabitants disturbed the service by ringing the bells; one fellow came into the church with a pot of beer and a pipe and remained smoking in his own pew until the end of the sermon. Some went into the gallery to spit below."

People often sigh for the "good old times" in various spheres of life's activities, but very frequently the modern customs are much better than those of our forefathers. Gray's line in his immortal Elegy about the "rude forefathers of the hamlet" may be interpreted in two ways; and if church-going has somewhat fallen out of fashion in the present age there is no doubt that those who do come to church are far more reverent in their devotions than their ancestors

were a century or more ago.

CHAPTER II

THE INSTRUMENTS

Many of the sins of their generations are visited on the heads of the great men of every age, and Oliver Cromwell was a notable instance of this historic fact. Much evil is attributed to him of which he was guiltless both in act and intention. Every visitor to a cathedral or noteworthy church is familiar with the totally unchallenged statement, "Cromwell destroyed this or that," and almost every iconoclastic deed of the fanatics among the Puritans has been attributed directly to the masterful Protector, including the wholesale destruction of church organs. In justice to his memory, it is but fair to state that he was a good amateur musician; that he was especially fond of the organ and had one set up in Hampton Court Palace for his own pleasure; that he constantly endeavoured to check the destructive excesses of his followers, and on most occasions counselled moderation and tolerance (see Morley's Life of Cromvell). In all probability, therefore, Mr. Henry Davey, of Brighton, was quite correct when he wrote to Notes and Queries (Ninth Series, Vol. III, 1899) defending Cromwell's memory in the matter of church organs and their destruction. It is true that they were abolished from English churches in 1644, and the method adopted in carrying out the law was too often riotous and sacrilegious destruction, but this was not by Cromwell's own wishes or orders.

The ravage of Chichester Cathedral and the destruction of its organ by the Parliamentarians are thus described by Dean Ryves: "The next day their first business was to plunder the Cathedral Church. They left not so much as a cushion for the pulpit, nor a chalice for the Blessed Sacrament. The commanders having in person executed the covetous part of the sacrilege they leave the destructive and spoiling part to be finished by the common soldiers. As they broke down the organ and dashed the pipes with their pole-axes they cried out in scoff, 'Harke how the organs goe'!" Cromwell was not present at the capture of Chichester, the Parliament troops being led by Waller, and at any rate we cannot lay the

destruction of its cathedral organ to his charge.

The Puritan rage against music and organs was not a bitter hatred of the instruments or music per se, but was rather a righteous indignation at the frivolous manner of the singing in vogue in the days of Charles I. As already stated, the Puritans were fond of music, and evinced it by their frequent Psalm-singing; moreover, in 1656 a Committee of Council was formed to assist in founding a

College of Music in London, a project that was only stopped by the

Restoration in 1660.

Dr. Percy Scholes in his scholarly book *The Puritans and Music* has conclusively shown that music was much cultivated by the Puritans, both in England and in New England (America); and the common statements of historians to the contrary have been accepted as facts by writers who have not studied the evidence about the subject at all. Dr. Scholes has given quotations from a large number of histories, dating from Hawkins in 1776 to various magazine articles a century and a half later, who have almost parrot-like repeated the figment that music was dead in England under the Puritans, especially during the Commonwealth. But Dr. Scholes produces abundant proof, both from books of instruction on music issued at the time and from contemporary records of the doings of musicians, which show that music was very much alive during the Commonwealth and afterwards.

Whoever was responsible, however, it is actually true that from the middle of the seventeenth century to the corresponding part of the nineteenth there were very few churches (other than cathedrals, collegiate chapels, etc.) wherein the instrumental part of the music was provided by an organ (excluding barrel-organs from the category for the moment). The cathedrals and some of the large town churches began to procure organs soon after the Restoration, but small village churches remained without them as a rule until the latter half of the nineteenth century. Direct evidence of this is furnished by the Selsey Collection of Psalms where the Preface, which

was written in 1842, makes this statement :-

"The Organ, it must be allowed, adds much to the effect of Church Music, and by a peculiarly ready construction it is now brought within the range of economy (however limited) of every parish. Its general adoption is therefore strongly recommended and earnestly to be hoped for.—Selsey, September 30th, 1842."

An enquiry was made in 1853 in a Sussex rural-deanery as to what music was used in seventeen churches and what instruments accompanied the singing. It was shown that even at that date only three of the churches had organs; and these had evidently been

obtained a short time before the enquiry.

The mediæval organs were of two kinds: the portative, a small instrument that could be carried about and played at the same time by the one performer; and the positive, a larger instrument which had to be placed in a position and remain there always. Both kinds are illustrated in the Peterborough Psalter, early fourteenth century, and in Canon Galpin's Old English Instruments of Music, with a full description of them.

Many churches had one of these from the fourteenth century onwards till the fatal order was given for their destruction. Frequent reference to them is made in literature of the time; often the words used are "a pair of organs," a phrase which has been explained in various ways. Some have thought it is a reference to two manuals [keyboards], or to a large number of stops, or to the number of bellows; but Canon Galpin shows, with good evidence, that it probably was used to indicate organs of a more extended compass downwards than the "single" instruments. A corresponding use of the term "pair" occurs where the bassoons of the most extended compass were called double courtals and those with a short compass single courtals. The word is often used to-day for organ-stops that sound an octave below the ordinary pitch, e.g. double diapason. (Also we speak of a pair of scissors or pair of steps, meaning only one complete implement.)

Owing probably to misunderstanding the phrase "pair of organs," a historian of Rye stated that the church there had four organs in the sixteenth century. In 1561 a man was sent from Rolvenden "to set the organs in order." The church did have two separate instruments, one in the choir and the other in the transept in 1513, but

probably not four.

When the order for the demolition of "superstitious monuments" was given, as already stated, the organs were easily destroyed. Nothing daunted, members of the congregations formed their bands

of minstrels.

The instruments that were used in these bands varied in number from about three to eight, sometimes more. I have discovered evidence to show that the following were played in some churches in England during the period indicated—their names being arranged as far as possible in the order of their frequency: violin, flute, larinet, violoncello (often called bass-viol), bassoon, trombone, boe, cornet, serpent, double-bass, ophicleide, cornopean, fife, aritone, cross-blown flageolet, flutina, concertina, banjo, bassnorn, French-horn, Kent-bugle; and of the miscellaneous instruments played alone—barrel-organ, seraphine, automatic reed-organ; various others—vamp-horn, pitch-pipe, triangle.

The introduction of various instruments into the church was not always approved, for an address delivered to the Society of Singers at Llanberis in 1827 contained this statement—"Such instruments as telyn [harp], bass and viol are unnatural to God and to the worship of Him. To play with the fingers on the strings is more fitting for satisfying the drunkard when he is in his wine than to use such for worshipping a Spiritual Being." Why it was a bad custom to use the fingers for strings and seemingly a good one to use them on keys

is not easy to understand!

As one might expect, nearly all the bands had one or more VIOLINS in them, and these began to be used even before the period of 1660 to 1860. Pepys makes several references to the instruments played in churches, though he alludes to them as viols, or vialls. On Christmas Day, 1662, he wrote—"The sermon done, a good

anthem followed, with vialls, and then the King came down to receive the Sacrament." By this date violins had ousted the softertoned treble viols of the previous century; and the viola and violoncello had displaced the tenor-viol and viol-da-gamba. The main difference between the earlier and later instruments was that the viols had flat backs and fronts with very sloping shoulders, while the later instruments (violins, etc.) had arched backs and fronts, and shoulders of a more square shape. This difference increased the power of the tone and improved its quality. Usually the conductor-leader himself played the violin, for he would lead with the melody of the tune, which was naturally regarded as the most important part. He found also that the bow was not only useful as a baton at times, but a very convenient rod of correction with which he might tap the heads of the choir-boys when they misbehaved themselves. To distinguish the stringed instruments from the brass-wind they were often called by old villagers the "wooden music."

In 1934, Mr. O. F. Wainwright of Belton, Lincolnshire, wrote—
"I own an old fiddle that was used in Melton Mowbray Church for
over 100 years. A local violinist when confronted by a passage he
couldn't negotiate would ejaculate: 'Stop, John, and rozin!'"
(This remark referred to the act of rubbing the violin-bow with

rosin.)

Sometimes the old minstrels made their own instruments, and doubtless prized them far more than they would any others, even if they had been made by the great Stradivarius. Here is an extract from a letter from Mr. H. C. Hunt of Chettle (Dorset), 1934—" My Father was born in 1818. His Father was then farming the glebefarm and played the violin and sometimes the bass fiddle in the Village Church. The gallery was entered by stone steps outside, the church has been re-modelled since. I have the violin that my Grandfather made in 1822, now much decayed in the sides; the body is of elm, nicely moulded and very thin. My Father remembered the whacking he got when, as a boy of four, he had been interfering with the clamps that were holding it together until the glue had set. He remembered the boiling of the wood to set the right shape. My Grandfather went to hear Methodist preachers when they came that way, but the Vicar forbad him playing at their services."

A violin that was used in Lindfield, about 100 years ago, has a short neck, with frets on it like those on the neck of a guitar, an

unknown addition to most fiddles.

The leader of the band at Birdham was a hot-headed old man, who flared up at any slight hindrance to his playing. One Sunday a string of his violin snapped, stinging him in its recoil in the cheek. This so enraged him that he flung his instrument down into the nave among the astonished congregation and shouted out—" Goo

down there and bide there! I'll never play 'ee no more!" And he kept his word.

The Flutte nearly always figured in the old church bands, and it was often used, if no pitch-pipe were available, to sound the note for the choir when the singing was unaccompanied. It was also occasionally employed as a rod for the castigation of small choirboys, thereby enhancing its many virtues in the eyes, or hands, of the choirmaster. The kind of flute that formed so helpful a member of the band was the transverse or German flute, so-called to distinguish it from the earlier English flute blown from the end. Most of the instruments used were of boxwood, about 2 feet in length, with only one key. At East Lavant there are two such preserved in the vestry of the church; one, dated 1821, made by Whitaker & Co., London, was played by Wm. Mitchell (b. 1805, d. 1859); the other, made by Bland and Weller, London, was the property of Thomas Wackford (b. 1807) and played by him in 1824. The Selsey flute (preserved in a glass case in the church) was made by D'Almaine, London, and is similar to the Lavant examples.

About a hundred years ago a certain country rector in Norfolk went to take duty at a neighbouring church, where he found the only instrument of music was a flute played by a villager. So badly did he play that the parson stopped the performance for several Sundays. This upset the flautist very much, and he refused to let anyone else take his place, nor would he practise his instrument at home. But for fear it might get dry with disuse and the wood crack, he hid the flute in the village pond to keep it moist until the rector of the parish returned to his duty and the "band" could

resume its beloved occupation.

Some of the old flutes were made by George and John Astor of Waldorf, Germany, who came to England about 1778. George remained in London, but John emigrated to America in 1783, where he made a handsome profit by the sale of flutes. He invested his money in a fur-trading company in 1809, and purchased land in the Bowery, New York. John would have been surprised if he could have foreseen the future outcome of his investment!

The mediæval predecessor of the flute was the recorder, but I

have not traced the use of one in any church.

The small flute, or Fife, was not common, perhaps on account of its shrill tone, but specimens still exist; a small one at Selsey by Clementi & Co., London, and the other, which I believe was used in South Bersted Church (maker A. Martin), now in my possession, is a large one of its kind, without any keys, having for its lowest note "g" (second line in treble stave).

The fife is chiefly associated in our minds to-day with military bands, it has indeed been used in the Army for two centuries, but it has also been employed in various other ways—in Lord Mayors'

Shows, in the drama, in the Royal Band and at times when a noise was required to attract a crowd. But its shrill notes were not always popular, and a warrant was issued by Charles II forbidding the playing of fifes without a licence from His Majesty's Sergeant Trumpeter. As an accompaniment to the Psalms the tone of the fife must have been more distracting than edifying, one would imagine; but, as a flautist once pointed out to Charles Hallé in discussing the respective merits of piano and flute, the latter instrument is the more portable of the two; and it can at least be said of the fife that it is more portable than the organ.

A rare instrument was a Cross-Blown Flageolet which formed part of the Buxted band in the middle of last century. It was invented and made by a man named Parker, of Piccadilly, London, but his idea was better than his workmanship, for the one specimen that I have seen is very much out of tune, some notes being flat or sharp. This flageolet is 23 inches long; it has six holes and one key, the scale being that of D. The mouthpiece of ivory is like that of an ordinary flageolet, but it is placed at one side, at a right angle, so that when played the instrument is held transversely like a flute, the tone of which it reproduces very well. The date of it is about 1850. It is preserved in a glass case in Buxted Church. Bainbridge,

of London, also made flageolets of this type, about 1830.

A great favourite with the old church musicians was the CLARINET, a single-reed instrument, of beautiful tone when well played, but capable of dreadful screeches in the hands of an indifferent performer. Probably the choir-boys of former days enjoyed this instrument with mischievous glee when badly played, though it was sometimes used with direful effects for their correction. An old choirman at Bosham, known throughout the parish in late years as "Grandsire" Arnold, joined the singers at the age of ten years (1829) and his seat in the gallery was near the clarinet player. If young Arnold stopped singing for a moment, the bandsman would thrust the bell of his clarinet into the lad's ear and blow a shrill and mighty blast to urge him to renewed effort. The instrument actually used for this edifying purpose is still in existence; it is of boxwood, with only one key left on it.

The old clarinets were usually of boxwood, and as that wood is inclined to warp and twist they must have often been out of tune in some of their notes. They had a varying number of keys—five,

six or, later, twelve.

John Pennicott (see p. 12) lived for forty years in Amberley, where he was bandmaster of the church. He was a clarinet player. On one occasion, through some misunderstanding with the vicar, the bandsmen, although present in church, refused to play, and the vicar, who was between eighty and ninety years of age, asked from the pulpit, "Are you going to play or not?" To which Pennicott

answered for himself and the bandsmen, "No!" The parson rejoined, "Well, then, I'm not going to preach," and forthwith came down out of the pulpit in a rage. Later, after the service was over and the parson walked down the village street, the band came out with their instruments and gave him "horn-fair" or "rough music" to the vicarage. On another occasion, the same band went out on strike. As they would not play at the service of the church, the vicar called upon all the inns in the village, and was successful in "freezing the taps"—that is, the landlords agreed not to serve any of the band with liquor. The bandsmen retorted by whitewashing the vicar's windows from top to bottom of the house during the

night. The behaviour of the occupiers of the seats in the minstrels' galleries very often, indeed, lacked that seemliness which one expects in a place of worship, and the voices of both singers and players were frequently uplifted in speech that was neither prayer nor praise. They joined lustily in their share of the service it is true, but if any little incident of an unusual nature occurred in the gallery or nave, they never hesitated to discuss the event in whispers that were by no means inaudible and in language that was not always becoming. One hot summer's day at Bosham a hundred years ago, the leading clarinet-player, warm and sleepy, left out many notes and uns of the music, and after a flagging attempt to keep up with the her bandsmen, he laid down his instrument and began mopping s heated brow with a big red handkerchief. The flute-player idged him and whispered "Play up, will ye!" To which the arinetist all but shouted a reply that was well heard by all the

congregation: "I can't play no more, I do sweats that bad I can't see!"

The poet Drayton, in his *Polyolbion*, mentions the "Shrillest shawm" which is closely akin to the Hautboy or Oboe, a double-reed instrument of penetrating tone, but of lower pitch than the treble shawm. The oboe was not very commonly played in church

bands, but several old specimens are still in existence.

One formerly used at Sidlesham, now in the Sussex Archæological Society's Museum at Lewes, is of boxwood, with ivory rings at the joints; it has two keys. Another bears the initials "T. E." and the date 1791 engraved on two of the keys. Clawton (Devon) had a flourishing band from 1780 to 1830, among the instruments it possessed being violin, bass-viol, flute, clarinet and hautbois (spelt "ohboy"). In the churchwardens' account book for 1800 at Cockshutt, Shropshire, 10s. was paid for Hot-boy reeds, later on for Hoby and again Holboy reeds. An oboe with two keys is preserved in Ampney Crucis Church, Gloucestershire, where it was played.

Kennington (Kent) had one hanging in the vestry whose date was about 1800. The "hautboy" at Caddington, Bedfordshire, was

purchased in 1787. As the oboe had a higher compass than the clarinet the tune was usually allotted to it and secondary parts given to the other wind instruments. The oboe was known in Dorset as the Vox Humana, probably because its tone somewhat resembled the plaintive stop of the organ, though this name was more correctly applied to the cor anglais or tenor oboe.

The oboe is an instrument of a very ancient type; it was frequently referred to in ancient literature as a shawm, schalm, shalm, shalmuse, or in various other spellings. The name is derived from the

mediæval Latin calamaula, a reed-pipe.

The lower-toned instrument of the shawm tribe is the Bassoon, a double-reed one of a total length of 8 or 9 feet, but reduced for convenience by being formed of two wooden pipes joined side by side in U shape, with a curved metal tube at the end of one of them in which the reed-mouthpiece is fixed. It is first mentioned in England towards the end of the sixteenth century when it was called the curtall (curtaile, corthol, etc.) or fagotto. About the middle of the eighteenth century the French name basson was adopted as bassoon.

In an Italian book by Zacconi, Prattica di Musica, published at Venice in 1596, one type of bassoon is mentioned under the name fagotto chorista, which suggests that the primitive bassoon was at one time regarded as peculiarly adapted for supporting the voices in church—a use to which the instrument was put in England down to

the last quarter of the nineteenth century.*

It is a lovely instrument with a tone peculiarly its own, that blends well with others in an orchestra, and it was evidently a great favourite with the old church minstrels. There are many references to it in churchwardens' account books, and also in literature, though authors do not seem to have appreciated it sometimes, no doubt having heard bad players performing on inferior instruments. At Exeter in 1728 it was called the "snuffling courtal"; at York about the same time "the cortal with deep hum, hum." Opposite to this is the statement in *Cornish Customs*, by A. K. H. Jenkin, that at St. Feock Church on one occasion there were seven bassoons, and "when they all played the bass and closed down on low F it was like heaven."

The church at Alfriston had five and Brightling was the possessor of nine of these instruments at one time, for a well-known iron-master, Mr. J. Fuller, M.P., in the parish, was so annoyed by the choir-singing that he presented these instruments to drown the voices!

In Sussex the bassoon was nicknamed the "horse's leg" (see p. 26)

^{*} Cf. (Proceedings of Musical Association, 1939-1940) "The Bassoon: its Origin and Evolution," by Lyndesay Langwill, to whom the Author is indebted for much information about this and other instruments.

from its supposed resemblance to that limb; or in some villages "Daddy's gun," because the player carried it over his shoulder on the way to church. Another name for it was "sacbut," a strange misapplication of the early name of the trombone.

The frequent references to this instrument in old churchwarden's

account books show its popularity:-

1712. At Bunbury, Cheshire, one was bought for £5 5s. od. At St. Giles, Northampton, the price was £4 13s. 6d. and the player received 10/6 per annum until 1799, when his salary was doubled. In 1772, at Hayfield, Derbyshire, the arrival of a bassoon was made the occasion of special rejoicing, for the record is "Spent with singers when the new Bazoon came 2s. 6d., and, charges when the Bassoune came, 3s. 6d." In 1818 Marston-on-Dove paid £1 1s. for repairing the bassoon.

The old bassoons had a varying number of keys, 4 until c. 1780, 6 until c. 1800, and 7, or more often 8, in the early nineteenth century.

The delightful silhouette of Mr. John Wells, of Lindfield, shows him playing his instrument in the middle of last century; this had nine keys. Mr. Wells was sexton and clerk of the parish and was a great musical enthusiast; he died in 1856. His father was parish clerk before him, and according to the custom of the time he would announce a psalm thus: "Let us sing to the praise and glory of God, Psalm 104, tune Hahn-over" [Hanover].

The bassoon at Wisbech was somewhat short, but was of a low sitch; it had a "bell" end. At Boldre, Hampshire, there is one that was made by G. Astor about 1780, with six keys. The bassoon formerly used in Brailes, Warwickshire (now in the collection of Mr. Langwill), was made by Cahusac, London, and is dated 1769.

An Astor bassoon (eight keyed) now in Buckinghamshire County Museum, played in Hawridge Church bears the following

inscription :-

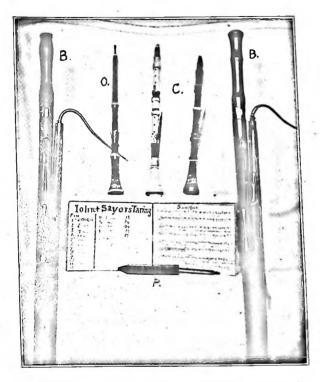
"I hear some men hate music, let them shew In holy writ what else the angels do; Then those who do despise such sacred mirth Are neither fit for heaven nor for earth!"

The wood used in making bassoons was maple, pearwood, boxwood or sycamore, but there is preserved at Stapleford, Nottinghamshire, one dated 1763 that was made of mahogany with brass

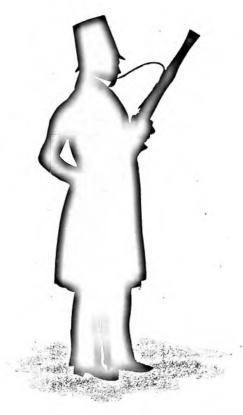
fittings.

A member of a congregation at a village church turned round to face the minstrels according to custom, when they were playing, and caught sight of the end of the bassoon above the edge of the gallery. In an audible whisper she asked, "Why has that player got his peg-leg sticking up in that way?"

A monument in Ashover Church, Derbyshire, bears this inscription: "To the memory of David Wall, whose superior performance



INSTRUMENTS FORMERLY USED IN WEST TARRING CHURCH.
B. Bassoons. O. Oboe. C. Clarinets. P. Pitchpipe.



JOHN WELLS, OF LINDFIELD, BORN 1812, DIED 1856.

Photo by W. Marchant, Lindfield, of original silbouette in possession of Miss Wells.

[To face p. 27.

on the bassoon endeared him to an extensive musical acquaintance. His social life closed on the 4th of December 1796, in his 57th year."

An amusing comment on the players of two "shawms" was made by a certain Dr. Pococke, of Welford, in 1770: "The game-keeper plays upon the Hautboy and the gardener upon the Bassoon, and these joined to 8 or 10 voices form a Harmony that strikes the attention most amazingly."

Nearly every band had that important member of the viol tribe

the Violoncello, or Bass-viol, as it was generally called.

One of the 'cellos still in existence is that which was used in Bosham Church, an interesting specimen inasmuch as it is made of thin copper. This instrument was in the possession of the Martin family at Bosham until 1916, when it was sold out of the parish, and, after passing through various hands, found its final resting-place in the Boston Museum of Fine Arts, U.S.A. Among the old documents and papers preserved in the parish chest in the church is a notice that was once posted on the door, containing a quaint reference to the bass-viol, or "bass-voil" as it is spelt:

"Whereas some evil-disposed person or persons did last evening during the usual time of ringing the Church bells enter the Sacred Edifice and wantonly and maliciously destroy three of the principal strings of the bass-voil in the gallery: Whoever will give information to the Church Wardens so as to lead to the conviction of the Offender or Offenders of such sacriligious conduct, the informers thereof will meet with a satisfactory Reward from certain respective Parishioners who feel themselves interested in the especial care and welfare, and will, if possible, protect from insult, or degradation, an old venerable Church, obviously known to be the most ancient and renowned in the Diocese.

Henry Brooker, Church Warden.

Parish of Bosham, February 25th, 1844."

Eastbourne is stated to have possessed a copper bass-viol or 'cello, as well as Bosham, but I have been unable to trace the history of this instrument.

In the Devizes Museum there is one made of sheet-iron by a village blacksmith-and no doubt used in some church in the

neighbourhood.

A home-made wooden 'cello was used in Shermanbury Church, with a flat front and back. It belonged to Mr. G. Roberts, of Henfield, whose father led the band and choir. The tone of the instrument was said to be very good, though it was probably rather feeble.

Angmering once had a musical rector in the person of the Rev. Wm. Kinleside, whose incumbency lasted from 1776 to 1836. He played the 'cello himself and encouraged his church band in every

At Billingshurst there passed away in 1918, in her eighty-second year, Mrs. Ireland, daughter of Rev. Henry Beath, vicar of Billingshurst, 1832-1858. Mrs. Ireland remembered the church band quite well, and often related an amusing instance of childlike imagination on her part. It was impressed upon her when a child that the church was God's House wherein He dwelt, but for a long time it was a mystery to her as to the part of His House in which one should look in order to see Him. At length an extra effort on the part of the player of the bass-viol solved the mystery for her; she came home and said: "I know where God is now; He is inside the big fiddle!"

One 'cello formed part of the band at Overton Church, Lancashire, for ninety years from about 1790; it was still in existence, though rather worm-eaten, in 1934 in the possession of Mr. R. Birkett, of Slough. Another instrument, still preserved, was used at Chipping Ongar, Essex, by the grandfather of the present owner, Mr. Walter Jackson, Cripsey Cottage. In Kent the 'cello was nicknamed the

" buck-fiddle."

The Double-Bass was used in a few churches, and was colloquially known as the "Grandmother Fiddle." The old "musickers" always alluded to the double-bass in the feminine gender, just as church bell-ringers refer to bells to this day—it is a belfry crime to speak of a bell as "he" or "it." The double-bass is still a true member of the viol family, being frequently made with the flat back and sloping shoulders of that class of instruments, of which, indeed, it is the only survival in actual use for modern music.

Of the stringed instruments that were plucked, either by a quill or other plectrum, or by the fingers, I have gathered no direct information. The only one of which I have been told that was used after 1660 was the modern Banjo, played in Brightling Church, Sussex, some seventy or eighty years ago. This was probably allowed as a matter of expediency, either to please some ambitious performer, or to obtain the attendance of some young man at the "prayers-going."

There were many varieties of plucked instruments in vogue in the Middle Ages—the rote, gittern, citole, pandore, mandore, lute, theorbo, psaltery, harp—and some of them were used in churches. J. Playford's Introduction to the Skill of Music, 1674, contains rules for singing the Psalms, and a reference is made to the tunes "as proper to sing to the Organ, Theorbo or Bass-viol."

In 1599 a musician named Richard Allison or Alison published a collection of the Psalms entitled, "The Psalmes of David in meter, the plaine song beinge, the common tune to be sung and plaide upon

the lute, orpharion, citterne, or base violl, severally or altogether, the singing part to be either tenor or treble to the instrument, according to the nature of the voyce, etc." From this it would appear that other instruments besides the organ were used for accompanying the Psalms before 1660; but Allison's collection was intended chiefly for private use, and the four parts of the music were so printed on each page that four persons sitting round a table could sing out of the same book, to the accompaniment of the citterne. These were all stringed instruments—the lute, orpharion and citterne being held and played in practically the same manner as the guitar, while the base-violl, or bass-viol, was bowed like the violoncello.

There is no direct evidence, however, that Allison's book was used in any church, or that the instruments named in its title-page were played, and there is no doubt that down to the middle of the seventeenth century the organ was the instrument most commonly

used.

Even the HARP, with its rich tone and extensive compass, was not introduced into any church, as far as I am aware, though the organist at Lindfield about the middle of last century trained his choristers in his own house to the accompaniment of a harp. The choir-practices were held in his house because the boys "would have been frightened to go and practise in the church at night, with the owls and the bats flying about."

An instrument that is now practically obsolete in England, but still to be met with in France, the Serpent, was a member of many bands. Its name owes its origin to its peculiar shape; this may be seen in the illustration of the Beeding example, which is still extant and preserved in the quaint museum at Bramber, Sussex. Invented at Auxerre, at the end of the sixteenth century, the serpent was early adopted for ecclesiastical purposes, being used in France under the name of Serpent d'Eglise to support the plain-chant. Some of the English clergy objected to its use in Divine Worship on the ground that it was unscriptural, but it was not uncommonly employed in England in the minstrels' galleries early last century. The instrument is usually made of thin wood, covered with leather, with four keys, though specimens made in the mid-nineteenth tentury had as many as fourteen keys; its total length is about 8 feet.

One that was used in Tavistock hangs in the church; another at Battisford, Essex, is in the museum at Christchurch Mansion, Ipswich, and others have been preserved at various places. At Minstead, Hampshire, there is a gravestone with a serpent carved on it—"To the memory of Thomas Maynard who departed this life July 9th, 1807, aged 27 years." The monument was erected by the Band of Musicians of the 8th Hants Yeomanry, of which Maynard

was a member, and it was probably played in the quaint old church

at Minstead, where the minstrels' gallery is still in being.

The tone of the serpent was mellow and tender, and much more appropriate for use in churches than the rather blatant brass tuba that has ousted it from modern orchestras. Its compass, which depended somewhat on the skill of the player, was from three to four octaves and it formed a very useful member of the band. But it was rather difficult to play, especially for anyone accustomed to the fingering of other wood-wind instruments; for, owing to its sinuosity, the finger-holes (three each for two hands) proceeded in one direction for the left hand and the opposite way for the right, so that in going up or down the scale the movement of the fingers was in either case a contrary direction for both hands. no other instrument has ever had such an awkward device.

Only one church in England, as far as I have been able to discover, used the Bass-Horn, and that was at Heathfield. In Heathfield Memorials by Percival Lucas, 1901, it is stated: "Four instruments that used to be played in the musicians' gallery are extant—2 bassoons, I bass-horn, and I brass serpent in case. They were some time in possession of the Covell family, having become the property of Mr. Covell, who was Parish Clerk for 30 years." This band was apparently composed of nothing but bass instruments, but I have ascertained that a flute and clarinet were also used there. The bass-horn made of brass was first designed by Régilo of Lille, c. 1780, as a serpent in bassoon-form. In 1800 Alexander Frichot, a French émigré in London, designed a similar instrument with four keys, and his idea was carried out by J. Astor, London. In the same year, Frichot published a "complete scale and gamut" for it. "The bass-horn, however, was too much of a serpent to survive any longer than its progenitor" (A. Carse). The brass serpent mentioned above was probably an ophicleide, for most of the serpents were made of wood, though some of them used in military bands were made of metal.

The instrument somewhat allied to the serpent, both in name and size, was the Ophicleide—the "keyed snake"—as its Greek name implies. It was made of brass and was invented in 1817 by Asté (Halary) of Paris, who patented it in 1821. "It was in every way the superior of the serpent and bass-horn (both of which it displaced) and its tone was much freer, more even and more resonant than that of the serpent" (A. Carse). The bore is strictly conical and wide for its length: total length of tube (Bb) nine feet, folded in U fashion into less than half this extent. The earliest ophicleides had nine very large holes covered by keys; the later instruments (c. 1822) had eleven keys. (See illustration.)

The ophicleide illustrated was formerly played in Penshurst Church, Kent, by James Payne, early in the nineteenth century. His son migrated to Chiddingstone, a neighbouring village, and no

doubt took the instrument with him, for it was discovered there in its box by Mr. Charles Larkin, of Edenbridge, who now possesses it.

An ophicleide was played at Rockhampton, Gloucestershire; here it was apparently not appreciated, for in an old diary of a former incumbent under date of 1850 is this entry: "Spoke to Woodward about not playing the ophicleide which obliged Farmer Pinnell to go out of church."

Another was used at Winkburn, Nottinghamshire, about 1850; it is still in existence and belongs to Mr. E. Bee, who doubtless keeps himself busy with it. Mr. F. Cox of Quemerford, Wiltshire, in 1934 informed me that he possessed the ophicleide which formed part

of the band at Seend about 1830.

In Cornwall this instrument ousted the serpent in several churches. An anonymous German writer called it a "chromatic bullock"!

A curiously mixed band was at Crowmarsh, Berkshire, about 100 years ago—two violins, a trombone, a 'cello and a Tin-Whistle. Probably the latter helped choir-boys to learn new tunes—and also perhaps made them envious of the players thereof. One was also used in a chapel at Holtye. The instrument, when well played, may have suited some of the old florid tunes with their "twirls and twiddles," but could hardly have suited the dignity of the "Old 100th," et hoc genus.

A great favourite among the old minstrels was evidently the TROMBONE and probably most of the bands had one at some time or other. This was in mediæval days called the SACKBUT, though that word has been used in the Authorised Version of the Bible as a translation of the Hebrew sabbekha, which was a harp. The trombone is familiar to most people—a long trumpet folded into a sort of elongated oval, with a U-shaped tube (the "slide"), which is moved up or down to produce the different notes by thus shorten-

ing or lengthening the whole instrument as needed.

Many years ago a dear old lady at Henfield, then in her ninety-first year, gave me some information about the church band, and on referring to the clever playing of Pennicott on the trombone she exclaimed: "What a lot of that brass he could get into his mouth, to be sure!" As a child she had watched him drawing in the long slide of the instrument and imagined that he swallowed the tubing each time! The trombone was used in several bands, generally where a large number of other instruments were also employed. At Crowmarsh, the band fascinated the children of the congregation because the end of the slide of the trombone kept on coming backwards and forwards over the front of the gallery. This was also the case at Broughton, Gloucestershire, where there was a bass-trombone inscribed "Tilcomb, Burford."

That popular and comparatively modern instrument the Corner (not to be confused with the old curved wood horn called *cornetf*)

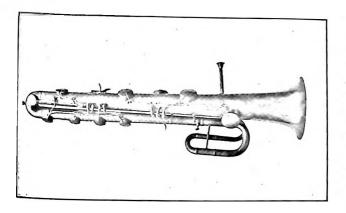
does not seem to have been widely used, probably because by the time it began to be known, from 1840 onwards, the church bands were already on the decline. One was used at Birdham, about 1856, with a violin and a harmonium—a transitional combination of instruments ancient and modern. Generally speaking, the advent of a harmonium or organ meant the immediate dissolution of the band, but here we have two of the old minstrels' instruments surviving along with the keyed interloper, invented not many years previously. At Westhampnett, the cornet was played by a dwarf who stood on a stool while playing, no doubt to the admiration of the youth of the congregation.

An early form of the cornet was the Cornopean which came into common use in military music, village bands and theatre orchestras about 1835. It has only two pistons, but its brilliant tone and charm ousted its predecessor, the keyed bugle, from the bands. At Berwick (Sussex) a young farmer was a regular attendant at the church services in the middle of last century, for his cornopean and a harmonium (another instance of a "transitional band") supplied all the music of that church for some years. It is said that the two instruments went beautifully together, but possibly distance would have enhanced the beauty. At Broughton, Gloucestershire, there were a cornopean, flute, clarinet and bass trombone; and at Cattistock, Dorset, there were two flutes, a violin and cornopean.

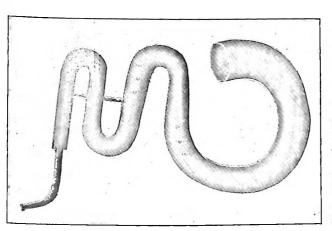
That loveliest of all brass instruments the French Horn was very rarely used in the minstrels' gallery, probably because it was expensive and also very difficult to play. Its mellow tone combined with strings and bassoons would have been a beautiful accompaniment to some of the old stately hymn tunes. One was used at Hailsham, in conjunction with a bassoon and clarinet—a worthy trio.

Only one instance of the Keyed- or Kent-Bugle has come to my notice in a village band; this was played in the Chapel at Verwood, Dorset, by a Mr. Haskell in the middle of last century. This bugle is said to have been invented in 1810—or perhaps "evolved" should be the term—for it was only an ordinary bugle which had five holes pierced in its side, covered by keys. This enabled the player to have two complete octaves, with chromatic notes, at his command. It was a favourite instrument, with a fine tone, and was much used in villages until about 1835 when its rival, the cornopean, began to oust it. The band at Verwood Chapel consisted of 'cello, violin, flute, piccolo, clarinet, trombone, tenor sax-horn, and the keyed-bugle—a fine combination of instruments indeed, well worthy of any place of worship.

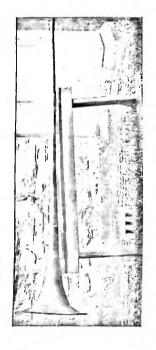
At the prettiest village in Kent, Chiddingstone (already mentioned in reference to the ophicleide,) there was flourishing a simple little brass







IV. Bax, Brighton, photographer.
SERPENT FORMERLY PLAYED IN UPPER
BEEDING CHURCH.



VAMP-HORN AT EAST LEAKE, NOTTS.

band about eighty years ago, consisting of a cornet, two baritones and a euphonium. The Baritone (not to be confused with the mediæval stringed instrument of the viol tribe called baryton) was the smaller bass sax-horn, one of the brass family invented or improved by Sax, about 1835 to 1840. One of these baritones was played by Mr. Henry Everest, who was born in Chiddingstone in

1853 and lived there all his life of about ninety years.

The Euphonium is the bass instrument of the sax-horn family; it has a fine deep tone and is a familiar member of military and brass bands. In the small church at Chiddingstone it must have been rather overwhelming in conjunction with the cornet and the two baritones, but probably the voices of the "Kentish Men" in the choir were as lusty as those of their eastern brethren, the "Men of Kent," the *invicti*, as the latter dub themselves; they would no doubt vie with the brazen voices in their own vocal efforts. "The euphonium helped the ophicleide to displace the serpent in the village bands in Cornwall" (Cornish Homes and Customs, by Hamilton Jenkins, 1933).

The lowest of the sax-horns was the Bombardon, or Contrabass Tuba, one form of which was a huge circular instrument passing over the performer's shoulder, with the bell pointing forwards. (The name originally belonged to the deeper varieties of the bassoon, but was applied to the big sax-horn in later times.) A former rector at Hatfield, Hertfordshire (appropriately named "Church"), who died in 1928, aged ninety, remembered as a boy seeing the player of the bombardon "sitting inside his large brass instrument." How delighted, and envious, the small boys must have been to see such a patriarchal trumpet sounding like the "last trump" mentioned in 1st Corinthians!

A curious and rare instrument was the VAMP-HORN, of which there are seven specimens still extant in England. Most of these are simple straight trumpets, or rather megaphones, without keys or valves. They vary in length from 3 feet to 7 feet 9 inches, and in diameter at the bell end from 7 inches to 24 inches. The places

where they are to be found and the sizes of each are:-

,			Length:			Diameter:
East Leake, Nottinghamshire				7	9	21
Willoughton, Lincolnshire			'	6	0	16
Harrington, Northamptonshire				5	0	13
Braybrooke, Nottinghamshire				4	0	24
Charing, Kent				3	6	16
Ashurst, Sussex				3	0	7
Haversham, Buckinghamshire				4	5	15

The word "vamp" is derived from the French avant-pied, originally applied to the piece of leather attached to the front part

the military drum-and-fife bands). A kettle-drum is a large instrument capable of a definite pitch, and two or more of them are required in orchestras; it is scarcely likely that a small village

church would have been supplied with one.

As a symbol of the Holy Trinity the TRIANGLE has been known from the earliest Christian days, and the simple little percussion instrument bearing that name has found its way into various places of worship. In the Coptic churches of Old Cairo cymbals, small bells * and triangles were all employed in the accompaniment of the hymns in the middle of the nineteenth century; and in 1846 a triangle formed part of the Rustington church band. The sounds produced by a triangle are not of a very dignified or solemn character; but neither were many of the "interludes" played between the verses of some of the old psalm-tunes (see the example on p. 58) and the bright little jingler was quite worthy of much of the music of the period.

A barrel-organ that once stood in a church in Gloucestershire, in the possession of Mr. W. H. Hickox, Kensington, has five stops: Diapason, Principal, Fifteenth, *Drum* and *Triangle*. There is another at Camborne. Evidently the worshippers and singers

were sometimes edified by these percussive aids to praise.

Several kinds of keyed or keyboard wind instruments found a ace in Divine Worship before the arrival of the harmonium and herican organ. At Albourne, some sixty or seventy years ago, han named Grinstead played a Flutina, a kind of a cross between accordion and a concertina. He stood behind the "winchigan" to play, and quite possibly his performance was of the nature of a vamping accompaniment, without a music-book.

Another of the same class was a Seraphine, the immediate precursor of the harmonium. The seraphine was invented by John Green, of Soho Square, London, in 1833, and consisted of a set of free reeds enclosed in a case, with keyboard and bellows. The tone is described in Grove's Dietionary of Music as harsh and raspy, and incapable of expression. This description of it does not tally, however, with the account given by Mr. W. Frost, of Cocking, who stated in 1917 in a letter, that "It was very much like a large box, and played as a harmonium, having a short keyboard, and blown by a lever on the right-hand side. Could be blown by foot or hand. No stops, quite a pleasant and soft tone, but rather monotonous. I think it would have been about 4 ft. long, 2 ft. wide and 3 ft. high. It was in Cocking Church about 1885. It

^{*} In the Armenian Church in Constantinople no musical instruments are used at all, but when the service is engaged in praise, a jingling noise is kept up with a quaint implement, called a Sirza. This consists of a large metal disc at the end of a pole, with a number of small bells hung round it. Two Snzas are continuously rattled until the service reverts to prayer or preaching.

was afterwards used in the School, but what became of it I cannot find out, and I left the parish about that time for a considerable period. The pipes were entirely closed in, some metal ones, upright in the front part, and the Bass, etc. wooden ones piled one over another horizontally at the back, with a large bellows underneath." In a sketch in his letter Mr. Frost shows that the Cocking instrument had a compass of three and a half octaves.

As will be seen from this description the seraphine at Cocking was not a free-reed instrument, but really a small pipe-organ. It is possible, however, that the pipes were only dummy ones for ornamental show, such as are often placed on American organs for that

purpose.

Eaton, Lincolnshire, had a seraphine "played by the wife of the Vicar who came there in 1845." Courteenhall, Northants, also had one. In the transactions of the Northants Architectural Society for 1853 appeared a paper by H. L. Dryden on church music complaining of the poor quality of it at the time and recommendations for the improvement thereof. "In quire training it is almost necessary that a Seraphine be used, as it is of great consequence that the choirmaster can speak while sounding a note. He must play single notes of scales to help singers. In default of this he must use one of Greave's pitch-pipes. For teaching intervals to choirs I prefer a seraphine to any other instrument."

There is a reference in this paper also to "a finger organ with grinding machinery called a dumb organist"—this meant a barrelorgan with a keyboard addition (see p. 41). The Greave's pitch-

pipes were thirteen in a set; the cost 15s.

At Balcombe during the interregnum between the dissolution of the band and the advent of the organ, a Concertina provided the musical accompaniment of the psalm-singing. To many people the concertina is solely associated with the Cockney holiday-maker and his vocal efforts, and the idea of its presence in a church may seem to border on the sacrilegious; but a good player with a firstclass concertina can obtain some brilliant effects and put a great amount of expression into them as well. Apart from its secular associations it is really no more inappropriate to the sanctuary than is a strident harmonium. And the concertina has at least the merit of being a little more antique than the harmonium, for it was patented by Wheatstone in England in 1829, while the harmonium was by Debain in France in 1840. And antiquity counts for merit in church affairs generally! The parish clerk of Tyringham-cum-Filgrave, Buckinghamshire, John Robinson by name, was married in the former church in 1822; he became parish clerk and sexton, and in his time played both the clarinet and concertina.

Many people think that there were no Organs (with keyboards) in the churches in the Middle Ages, but as already related (p. 19),

a number of them were in use long before the order for their demolition in 1644, even as early as the twelfth century. But as so many of them were destroyed about 1644 and comparatively few were installed till towards the end of the period covered by this book, little will be said about them now. It may be of interest, however, to show that organs were in use in the Middle Ages in country churches, as is indicated by the following entries in churchwardens' accounts:—

In Rye Accounts appears this item under the date 1512:—

"For the bringing the organ from London to Rye 1 3 8

In 1514:—

"For scouring and mending the old organ now standing in Our Lady Chapel 10 0

In 1523:—

"Pd. the organ maker; for making St. George's organ 1 4

At Louth in 1475 the organ player was paid 20s. for one year. In 1480 Hythe paid the parish clerk 10s. for keeping the organs. In 1492 John Sturgeon, of Hitchin, bequeathed "unto a cunnying man every year playing at organs in the church at the masse of Iesus 40s." Rotherfield, 1532, paid for "th' old organs" 10d. Orgayne Pypes" cost 10s. at W. Tarring in 1570. At Ludlow in 1549, the cost of "shifting the organs to the hie aulter" was 11d. Certain "orgle pipes" were bought for Rotherfield in 1606.

A widespread controversy was carried on from early in the seventeenth century for a couple of hundred years as to the respective merits of organs and bands. A motion to prohibit the former was

made in Convocation in 1562 and lost by one vote.

T. Mace in Music's Monument advocated the introduction of organs in all churches. Many writers and church authorities took opposite sides in the controversy. An organ was purchased for Tiverton Church in 1696, at which some people complained that the money might have been better spent on the Poor. In a Treatise on Instrumental Music in Holy Offices, by H. Dodwell, 1700, reference is made to the subject and it is stated that the former Tiverton organ has been sacrilegiously pulled down.

J. Shepherd in A Critical Elucidation of the Book of Common Prayer, 1817, says "The want of an organ cannot be supplied by any other instruments. Violins, bassoons, flutes, etc., ought to be entirely

excluded."

All Saints Church, Hertford, was among the few churches that introduced an organ fairly soon after the Restoration, in 1698.

The Rev. A. Beresford, a good musician, published in 1711 The Great Abuse of Music in which he ascribes the poor singing of the

time to the bad playing of the organs where they existed. A. Riley, London, wrote in *Public Music Corrected*, 1762, that organists often spoilt the singing by playing too loudly, by their absurd shakes and flourishes, and by playing "interludes" between the verses in

triple time to a tune in common time.

So the controversy went on for many years, till with the great wave of church restoration (and often spoliation) that took place in the latter half of the nineteenth century, organs were installed in many churches and have been generally accepted ever since. It has been a misfortune in one respect; for with its advent, though it has been conducive to more correctness of pitch and tune no doubt, the old minstrels and lusty singers, with their boundless zeal and fervent diligence, their homely piety and sincerity, disappeared from our churches.

Nothing more need be said about finger-organs, for, as has been shown, not many were in use, except in cathedrals and town

churches, during the period from 1660 to about 1860.

But there was another kind of organ which was very much in vogue during this period, for in most churches where a band was not in existence, or where one had ceased to exist or not yet come into being, the accompaniments to the Psalms were nearly always provided by a BARREL-ORGAN, an instrument that had the obvious advantage over all others that it could be played without learning or practice—the performer simply turned a handle and pumped the bellows or "feeders." They were also called "winch" organs and "dumb" organs; and one old man spoke of one as a "grindstun [grindstone] orgin."

"The Organs of this type were being made as early as 1598; Thomas Dallam built one that could be played either by hand or by a barrel. In 1615 Peter Philips arranged a madrigal for the barrel-

organ, and Handel composed several pieces for it."*

These organs were in common use for over 100 years and were in various sizes, some having several stops and others none. They were generally furnished with three separate "barrels," each having ten or twelve tunes which could be brought into action as required. The barrels were wooden cylinders about 3 feet 6 inches long and 8 or 9 inches in diameter, with staples on them varying in length according to the duration of the notes. These staples raised certain keys and thus worked the mechanism that allowed the wind to reach the required pipes. The barrel-organs used in churches rarely had complete chromatic scales of notes, but only enough pipes to form the two or three major scales of G and D, or G, D and A; and all the tunes marked on the barrels had to be transposed into one or other of those keys. One result of this was that whenever a "winch-organ" was converted into a "finger-organ" (a keyboard one) as was frequently done, all the music played thereon had to be in

^{*} From Music of the Eighteenth Century Village Church, by the Rev. Noel Boston.

one or other of the keys of the original instrument, or be transposed

accordingly, unless the missing pipes were added.

An interesting letter on this subject was sent to me in 1917 by the late Mr. A. W. Lambert, of Chichester, who had at one time been organist of Singleton. He wrote: "It was in 1870 when I was first articled to Dr. Gladstone (then organist of Chichester Cathedral) the Schoolmaster turned the barrel-organ into a Manual Organ, but it could only be played in three keys. I well remember on the occasion of Bishop Gilbert's death I was asked to play the Dead March, and I had to play it in the key of A. If I remember rightly there were only four octaves. I cannot remember the number of barrels but I believe there were three. The blowing was done by a

boy turning the handle."

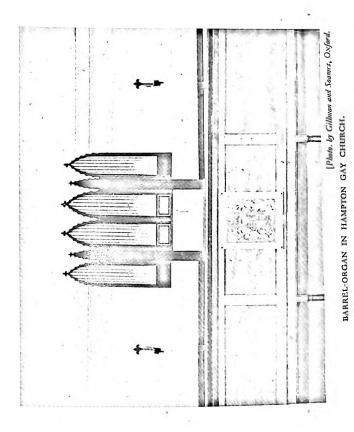
Many of these old instruments are still in existence, some of them in good order and playable. A typical example is at Hampton Gay, Oxfordshire, for a description of which I am indebted to Colonel S. Bury, of Long Crendon Manor, whose family had an interest in the church from 1545 to 1700, and again from 1934. The barrel-organ was built by Bryceson of London, between 1830-1840; many of them were made by him. The stops are: Stopped Diapason, Principal, Twelfth, Fifteenth, Tierce; each has twenty-two pipes. There are three barrels containing ten tunes each, viz. first barrel: Cambridge New, Cranbrook, 110th Psalm, Easter Hymn, 104th Psalm, St. Anne, Carey's, Sheffield, Haughton, Peckham. Second: Daveys, Angels Hymn, Adeste Fideles, Mount Ephraime, Bedford, Evening Hymn, St. James, Sicilian Mariners, Abridge, New Eagle The tunes on the third barrel cannot be deciphered.

The barrel-organ at Brightling is in good condition, and was used up to recent years for the voluntaries before and after service. has forty-three notes and seven stops: Open Diapason, Stopped Diapason, Principal, Octave, Flute, Fifteenth, Mixture, and one other (name label lost). There are two barrels, each with twelve tunes, most of them having many "repeats and twiddles" in the way of runs and shakes. The organ is in the gallery at the west end of the nave, and the performer stands behind it and "blows" with his left foot on a pedal, while his hands are occupied with grinding

the handle and manipulating the stops.

At Avington, Hampshire, the barrel-organ has only three stops— Open Diapason, Stopped Diapason and Principal; two barrels. There are thirty tunes altogether: Morning and Evening Hymn, 100th Psalm, Hanover, Wareham, Portuguese, St. Stephen, Cambridge New, St. Ann, Shirland, Sicilian, Helmsley, German, New Seventh Carys, St. James, Mt. Sinai, Shorts Cottage, Moscow, Luther's Missionary Hymn, Lord Dismiss, My Rest is in Heaven; six chants.

Many of the old barrel-organs had secular tunes as well as sacred melodies, and very often they were used to entertain the bucolic



[To face P. 40.



A BARREL ORGAN, OVER ONE HUNDRED YEARS OLD. Played by the Parish Clerk in Shelland Church, near Stowmarket, Suffolk.

(and alcoholic) peasant mind in the village inn. This mingling of the celestial music with the worldly, the spiritual with the spirituous, led to unhallowed results sometimes. The barrel-organ in Berwick Church, Sussex, had clockwork for its motive power, and on one occasion instead of stopping at the end of a psalm the mechanism gave a "click," and the congregation were then regaled with a comic song entitled "Little drops of brandy"; after which there was another "click" and then "Go to the Devil and wash yourself" !

The barrel-organs were not usually dated, but from parish records and also from the titles of their tunes the year when they were made, or bought, can sometimes be learned. One of the earliest seems to have been made by Bryceson, who installed it in Hartfield Church, in 1726; a late one with "one manual and a barrel for mechanically playing eleven psalm-tunes" was made by Walker for Watford parish church in 1842. Still later Walker made one for Steeple, Dorset, in 1859; and another was introduced into Standon Massey,

Essex, in 1850.

The barrel-organ at Parham is undated, but judging from its secular tunes, it was made between 1790 and 1800. One of the latter is a song entitled "He's ay a kissing me," and another is "With my mug in my hand." It is to be hoped that the parish clerk did not put these on instead of the Old 100th at any time I

At a certain Yorkshire church the organ suddenly stopped; the clerk looked towards the vicar and called out, "Please, Sor, the

'anell 'as coom off!"

About 1830 Jevington resolved to have a winch-organ and a farmer churchwarden was deputed to fetch it in his waggon from London. At the same time his spouse, bent on being cleanly as well as Godly, commissioned him to bring her a new washing-machine. Both were duly brought down from "Lunnon" on a Saturday; but driving teams on dusty roads was thirsty work, and turnpike inns were open-doored and enticing; so the sacred organ was deposited in the farm-house kitchen and the mundane washer was

set down in the church!

"The organ At Stanmer the barrel-organ also had a keyboard. was played by the honorable Ladies at the mansion; when they left home we fell back on the wretched barrel. This had many evils; it could not be lightly suppressed when once its services were employed. Occasionally we had an instrumental solo after the words were finished, but we were never so badly fixed as the good folks at Wannock were reputed to have been. We could not have carried our persistent barrel out of Church, if we had been so minds our persistent barrel out of Church, if we had been so minded. Their barrel could not be silenced even when thrown into an open grave, for tradition says that it then began on its own-All people that on earth below."

The instrument at Cardiston, Shropshire, was last used about 1879,

but it was restored in 1935 and is preserved in its church. It has two barrels with ten tunes on each. There is one at Shelland,

Suffolk, still in use.

The Musical Times in 1860 had two advertisements in its columns: one of "a perfect gem of a Finger-organ, 4½ octaves, contains 4 stops"; the other of a "Barrel-Organ playing 40 Psalm-tunes and chants, four barrels." These two announcements indicate the transitional period between the two kinds of organs.

McClintock, the Arctic explorer, found a barrel-organ in the

Danish Church at Holsteinboz, Greenland, in 1858.

Mr. A. T. Robinson, of Whitwell, Hertfordshire, wrote some Reminiscences of an Old Organist in which he states that "After the construction of the organ at St. Paul's Church, Walden, in 1850 . . . a difficulty arose as to who could play it, and to get over the difficulty a dumb-organist (a kind of barrel-organ) was used. I remember a lad turning the handle. There were two barrels with various hymns and chants, and the mechanism was so arranged that the keys of the organ were pressed down just as if someone were playing it with their fingers. About 1855, however, an organist became available and the dumb-organist was discarded. The peculiarity of the organ as that it had a sliding key-board, which had to be drawn out when quired, and on one occasion when I was ill, I asked a friend to take e services for me. When he arrived he could not find the keyoard, but as he remembered reading something about sliding keyboards, he opened the organ, and drew out the keys, and the service proceeded."

Akin to the seraphine and barrel-organ was the AUTOMATIC REED-ORGAN (a specimen was in my possession). This instrument is 19 inches in height and 20 inches in width. Instead of pipes the notes are produced by reeds a sare those of a harmonium, but otherwise the mechanism is like that of a barrel-organ. It has only one cylinder with three sacred tunes and several secular. The date of it is probably about 1850. Where this actual instrument was used is not known; but from a description given to me of "a kind of musical-box of large size, and turned by a handle" that provided the accompaniments at Probus, Cornwall, I believe there was one at

that church somewhere in the middle of last century.

Another of the reed instruments was the ACCORDION, which is probably sufficiently familiar to most people to need no description. Only two churches, as far as I know, ever made use of this, Worth, Sussex, about 1860, and White Roding, Essex.

In the churches where neither band nor barrel-organ was available the singing was rendered without any accompaniment, the keynote of the tune being given out on a PITCH-PIPE by the parish clerk. These pipes were made of wood, about 18 or 19 inches in length, and in section about $1\frac{1}{2}$ inches square: a few of them were round. The mouthpiece, at one end, was similar to that of an ordinary tin-whistle, while at the other end was a wooden plug on which the notes of the scale were marked. The plug was pulled out to the indication mark of the required note, the pipe was then blown, and the members of the choir took their own particular note by singing the word "Praise!" or "Praise ye the Lord!" When all had obtained their proper notes the leader gave a signal and off they started on what must have often been an uncertain musical venture.

The instrument was sometimes called spoke-pipe or psalms-pipe. The pitch-pipe at Cartmell Fell, Lancashire, a round one, was last used in 1867 when a harmonium was given to the church. The old Clerk who blew it would announce a psalm thus: "Psalm twooty-two!", and no doubt the minds of the frivolous echoed him with "tootle-too!" At Hook Church, Surrey, there were two members of the choir (you must guess their sex) who could not always agree about the note sounded and audibly vented their difference in the middle of the service. The pitch-pipe was discontinued there in 1856.

One at Cavendish, Suffolk (still preserved), is of great interest, for it is among the few that bear a date and an inscription:—

"To Cavendish Church I do belong, And they who harm me will do wrong, For I was brought here to reside While perfect sounds in me abide. 1781."

One was bought for Milford, Hampshire, in 1791, for 55. Sometimes the plug of the pipe would get pushed in by accident and the result, when a note was sounded, was chaos among the singers when they tried to start a tune several notes higher than the proper pitch.

In a psalm-tune book by Edward Miller (c. 1790) the keynote of each tune is given at the head of it, so that the right pitch might be

sounded on the pitch-pipe.

In a work entitled Concert Room and Orchestra Anecdotes by Dr. Thomas Busby (1825) it is stated that the parish clerk used to set the tune by the sound of an old brass candlestick, upon which he rapped his knuckles to give the keynote. But after a while this

homely instrument gave way to the pitch-pipe.

The parish clerk was a very important official for centuries and he exercised a strong musical influence in England. He came next to the parish incumbent in position at the services, and his duty was to make the responses, announce the Psalms and often to start the singing with the pitch-pipe. He would sometimes teach the choir or grind the barrel-organ, and perform many other minor duties in the church. The London Parish Clerks constitute one of the City Livery Companies; it was incorporated by Henry III in 1232.

A memorial to Philip Roe, who died in 1812, is set up in Bakewell

Church, Derbyshire. This briefly shows the appreciation of the status of a parish clerk; it is as follows:—

"The Vocal Powers here let us mark
Of Philip, our late Parish Clerk;
In church none ever heard a Layman,
With a clearer voice say Amen.
Who now with Hallelujah's Sound
Like Him can make the Roof rebound?
The Choirs lament his Choral Tones,
The Town—so soon, lie here his Bones.
Sleep undisturbed within thy peaceful shrine
Till Angels wake thee with such notes as thine."

(This information about parish clerks is taken from the Oxford Companion to Music, edited by Dr. Percy Scholes.)

CHAPTER III

THE MUSIC

The musical outlook of our forefathers in the church gallery was evidently a limited one, for the energies of both composers and



FACSIMILE (3 SIZE) OF OLD LOOTH FROM The Art of Descant, BY T. CAMPION, 1664.

performers seem to have been largely confined to the music of the metrical versions of the Psalms, with only a few anthems and hymns.

The making of metrical versions of Holy Scripture was a common employment of ecclesiastics during the Middle Ages; and the custom

[48] PSALM-TUNES.

Dorchester Tune. PSALM XV. Old Version. Treble.



² The man whose life is uncorrupt, whose works are just and strait;

FACSIMILE OF P. 48 OF EVISAN'S A Compleat Book of Psalmody, DATE 1750.

Whose heart doth think the very truth, and tongue speaks no deceit.

That to his neighbour doth no ill, in body, goods, or name;
Nor willingly doth slanders raise, which might impair the same.



[49]



4 That in his heart regardeth not malicious wicked men

But those that love and fear the Lord, he maketh much of them.

His oath, and all his promites, that keepeth faithfully,

Altho' he make his cov'nant so that he doth lose thereby.

Meefiban

FACSIMILE OF P. 49 OF EVISAN'S A Compleat Book of Psalmody, DATE 1750.

is stated to have arisen in imitation of the old Teutonic chronicles of domestic and national transactions which were recorded in metre. The Saxon and Waldensian clergy wrote these metrical paraphrases in order to assist the memory, or to provide the secluded monk or wandering pilgrim with some hallowed strain as a solace to his loneliness; or to supply the minstrel with some more worthy theme than the facry legend or the gay romaunt. Most of these compositions were designed only for private or secular use; they were not used in the service of the Church till the Reformation, when they were adopted for the benefit of the congregations, who were now to take a more intelligent part in the singing than in the early Middle Ages of the Church. For about two or three centuries after the Apostolic Age all the singing at the services was congregational, but a special order of singers (Psalmistæ) began to arise about the beginning of the fourth century, to whom chiefly was committed the rendering of psalms and hymns. These "canonical singers" were mentioned at the Council of Laodicea (about A.D. 363).

With the dawn of the Reformation, however, the primitive custom of congregational singing was revived, when the old Latin version began to be displaced by metrical versions in the native tongue. The disciples of Wycliffe sang psalms in metre in the fourteenth century; and early in the next century John Hus, in Germany, versified the 128th Psalm and introduced psalmody, with music of slow notes of

equal length.

The metrical psalms were never an essential part of the Prayer Book office, but were used at certain intervals without disturbing the remainder of the service. This use was based on the injunction of Queen Elizabeth, that "in the beginning or the end of Common Prayer there may be sung an hymn or suchlike song to the praise of Almighty God in the best sort of melody or music that may be conveniently devised, having respect that the sense of the hymn may be understood and perceived." The Puritans wished to introduce hymns into the revised Prayer Book in 1662, but this was refused.

Of the numerous early metrical versions of the Psalms in English that by Sternhold and Hopkins and others, issued for the first time with about forty tunes in 1562, was practically everywhere the most popular. This was the "Old Version" as distinguished from the "New Version" of Tate and Brady, published in 1696. It is stated by J. Holland in The Psalmists of Great Britain (1843) that the Psalms, in whole or in part, had been rendered into English verse by over 150 authors; of these about seventy were complete versions.

The Old Version owed its origin to Thomas Sternhold, Groom of the Robes to Henry VIII, who translated and published fifty-one psalms in 1549. To these were added later fifty-eight others by John Hopkins, a schoolmaster; five more by a priest named William Whittyngham, and others by Thomas Newton, a barrister, Robert Wisdome, and by a Scottish divine named William Kethe.

The whole of these were collected together and published, with music, in 1562 by John Day; and the work was for a long time commonly known as "Day's Psalter." It is worth noting that the first two versifiers of the Psalms in English were laymen, and it is their names that have survived while the others associated with them are all but unknown. This Old Version went through 600 editions.

The Old Version and the New Version of Tate and Brady superseded nearly all the others in the churches throughout England. The language of them is simple, direct and easy to be understood obvious causes of their popularity. Moreover, the words jingle along in strongly marked rhythm, and they can be more readily committed to memory than many poems of much greater merit. A comparison of three versions of the 1st Psalm, of which the third is by far the best poetry, will exemplify this statement:—

OLD VERSION, 1562

- The man is blest that hath not lent to wicked men his ear, Nor led his Life as sinners do nor sat in scorner's chair.
- But in the Law of God the Lord doth set his whole Delight:
 And in the same doth exercise himself both day and night.
- He shall be like a Tree that is planted the Rivers nigh: Which in due Season bringeth forth its Fruit abundantly.

New Version, 1696

- How blest is he who ne'er consents by ill advice to walk Nor stand in sinners' ways, nor sits where men profanely talk.
- But makes the perfect law of God his business and delight Devoutly reads therein by day and meditates by night.
- Like some fair tree, which, fed by streams, with timely fruit doth bend, He still shall flourish, and success all his designs attend.

VERSION BY JAMES MERRICK, 1765

- O how blest the man, whose ear Impious counsels shuns to hear; Who nor loves to tread the way Where the Sons of Folly stray, Nor their frantic mirth to share, Seated in Derision's chair; But, to Virtues' path confin'd, Spurns the men of sinful mind.
- And, possess'd with sacred awe, Meditates, great God, thy law, This by day his fix'd employ, This by night his constant joy.
 - Like the tree that, taught to grow Where the streams irriguous flow, Oft as the revolving Sun Through the destin'd months has run, Regular, its seasons known, Bending low its loaded boughs, He his verdant branch shall spread, Nor his sick'ning leaves shall shed; He, whate'er his thoughts devise, Joyful to the work applies, Sure to find the wish'd success Crown his hope, his labour bless.

Another verse or two from the Old Version will afford an idea of the beauties of the "poetry" in which the pious aspirations of our forefathers were clothed:—

So many buls do compass me
That be full strong of head,
Yea, buls so fat, as though they had
In Basan field been fed.

They shall heap sorrow on their heads; Which run as they were mad; To offer to the idle gods Alas 1 it is too bad!

And in the 74th Psalm, verse 12, the Almighty is addressed in most ludicrous terms:—

"Why doost withdraw Thy hand aback, And hide it in Thy lappe, O pluck it out and be not slack To give Thy foes a rappe."

One can only call such poetry sheer doggerel, and much ridicule and criticism have been aimed at Sternhold and Hopkins for their attempt to make a poetic version of the Psalms. A Cavalier writer, Edward Philips, thus described someone singing:-

"Like a crack'd saints' bell jarring in the steeple, Tom Sternhold's wretched prick-song for the people."

When the Earl of Rochester heard the sound of psalm-singing in a church he wrote :---

> "Sternhold and Hopkins had great qualms, When they translated David's Psalms, To make the heart right glad; But had it been King David's fate To hear thee sing and them translate, By God! 'twould set him mad!"

Dr. Johnson spoke scathingly of all metrical versions and in referring to Dr. Watts' hymns, he said, "It is sufficient for Watts that he had done better than others what no man has done well."

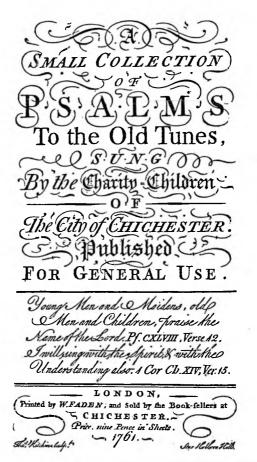
In spite, however, of the adverse opinion of those with cultured taste, the Old Version became so popular that Bishop Jewel in the seventeenth century said that he had seen six thousand persons, old and young, assemble round Paul's Cross to sing the Psalms in metre; and there can be no doubt that the people obtained a knowledge of the Psalms through Sternhold and Hopkins such as they would hardly have gained in any other way.

It was often as a matter of necessity that the Psalms should be learnt by heart by our ancestors, for many of them could neither read nor write. Naturally, therefore, those versions of the Psalms which could be most easily grasped and retained by the simple minds of the untutored "musicianers" were the most popular and the most widely used; and the Old and New Versions were generally deemed to fulfil all the requirements of the old-time choirs in a satisfactory

Many marvellous feats of memory are recorded of unlettered folk in all countries * and those of English people, in the days when most of the villagers "weren't no scholards and never knowed 'ow to read," were quite as wonderful as those of other places.

During the two centuries between 1660 and 1860 there were actually hundreds of psalmodies and hymn-books issued in England, most of them compiled for special churches or parishes. In the British Museum Reading Room the lists of their titles (with the Various editions of them) occupy ninety-two pages of the catalogue. Not all these pages are filled with these titles, it is true, but even so the number is very large.

^{*} When I was in Macedonia in 1918 I heard a Serbian gypsy band play for feur bours without a note of music in front of them.



FACSIMILE OF TITLE-PAGE OF CHICHESTER PSALMODY.

The majority of the old compilers of tune-books were fully alive to the popular taste in the matter of words, though they were perhaps not always aware of the reason for it, and as a consequence Sternhold and Hopkins, and Tate and Brady were generally the chosen authors of the metrical psalms to which they set their tunes, while Watts

was their favourite hymn-writer.

During the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries among the many writers who made metrical versions of the Psalms may be mentioned the following: Sir John Denham, born in 1615, who fought on the Royalist side in the Civil War. Miles Smyth whose version appeared in 1668. Richard Baxter, died 1691, author of "Ye holy Angels bright" and "Lord, it belongs not to my care" and others now used in modern hymn-books. John Patrick (end of seventeenth century) whose complete version passed through seven editions. Thomas Parnell, 1679–1717, whose metrical paraphrases of psalms were widely read, if not sung. Sir Richard Blackmore, a court physician, died 1729; issued "A New Version" of the Psalms which bid fair to rival that of Tate and Brady. James Merrick, born 1718, died about 1769; his versions of the Psalms appeared in 1765; they are paraphrases rather than translations.

Most popular of all was Isaac Watts, born 1674, died 1748. His Psalms of David appeared in 1707. He reigned supreme as a psalmist in English Nonconformity for a hundred years; and all compilers of psalmodies and hymn-books down to the present day have drawn upon him very largely for their books, whether they were compiled

for chapels or churches.

Many of these books were issued in a very costly manner; large volumes bound in leather, each page printed from a specially engraved metal plate, with decorative title-pages of elaborate scrollwork. They were sometimes published by subscription at a guinea each. Others were of a much humbler kind; one of them is an oblong miniature psalmody measuring only 2½ by 4 inches, published in 1778.

In addition to the printed volumes most of the choirs had manuscript books, carefully done by the singers and players themselves,

some beautifully penned and ornamented in various ways.

One may ask: What has become of all these hundreds of choirbooks, and why are none of them in use now? The answer is that on May 20th, 1861, Hymns Ancient and Modern appeared, and that rather remarkable work (as it seemed then) became so popular that it swept most of the old psalmodies and hymn-books out of use all over the country. And, unfortunately, many of these were thrown away or burnt, or simply laid aside on a dusty shelf; or more happing placed in some museum or among the musical treasures of a private collector.

One of the earliest psalmodies that appeared after 1660 forms a chapter in John Playford's Introduction to Music, 1664. This

section is headed "Rules & Directions for Singing the Psalms." He states that those "who are principally concerned in this are Parish Clerks, being the Leaders of those Tunes in their Congregations." There are twenty-nine tunes in this part of Playford's book (Seventh Edition, 1674), but he refers to a recently published book of his entitled Psalms & Hymns in Solemn Musick of Four Parts in which are forty-seven tunes "proper to sing to the Organ, Theorbo, or Bass-viol."

A very elaborate and costly example of the old psalmodies was compiled by a Sussex parson, and a description of it will give an idea of the kind of books the best ones were; its title indicates the

reason for its publication.

This noteworthy volume is entitled Improved Psalmody, compiled by the Rev. William Dechair Tattersall, A.M., Rector of Westbourne, and published in 1794. The words chosen were: "The Psalms of David from a Poetical Version originally written by the Reverend James Merrick, A.M., Fellow of Trinity College, Oxford," while the music was "collected from the most Eminent Composers." The book is bound in leather (oblong, 103 inches by 81 inches) and contains 348 pages of music, beautifully printed from special plates, with forty-six pages of introductory letter-press. There is also a List of Subscribers, among whom appear Dr. Dupuis, Juiseppe Haydn, Mus.Doc.(Oxon.), Samuel Johnson, Esq., and other ell-known names. The work opens with a fine dedication to ing George III:—

"To the King's Most Excellent Majesty.

sire.

In aspiring to dedicate to your Majesty a Work, which has for its sole object the service of Religion, and the credit of the National Church, I have sought to place your name, where every action of your life and reign has tended to establish it, in connection with true piety and public spirit. To doubt, that in the mind of every well-disposed person throughout your Majesty's dominions, the sanction of your name to such a work, will have peculiar weight, would be at once injurious to your Majesty and to your Subjects. With far other sentiments, and with every feeling of loyalty and attachment,

I am your Majesty's most obedient and devoted Subject,

W. D. TATTERSALL."

After this fine address comes an "Advertisement" from which an extract is here given:—

"The late Dr. Thomas, Bishop of Rochester, was equally gratified with the new form given to this version [Merrick's] and recommended it to be sung with the selected tunes by the Choir of his Church at Bromley. His Lordship, in answer to the first letter of the Editor, returned sthanks for (what he condescended to style) a well-turned application of Mr. Merrick's psalms, to the much wanted improvement of church music; or rather, to the more sensible and edifying use of it in parochial churches."

The body of the work consists of Merrick's version of Psalms 1 to 75, set to 217 tunes (an unusually large number for that time) with an Appendix of twenty-eight pages of other tunes. Each page is printed from a special metal plate (the tunes are in three parts only) and the cost of the production of the volume must have been enormous. The expression marks seem quaint to anyone accustomed to the usual Italian terms, for most of them are in plain and simple English: thus—loud, soft, chearful, slow, tenderly, lively, rather brisk, soothingly. Tattersall had issued a smaller book of tunes in 1791 and intended issuing a second volume of his psalmody, but his object was never fulfilled.

Early in the nineteenth century a Brighton musician, Nathaniel Cooke, organist of the parish church, made a remarkable contribution to church music by issuing—A Collection of Psalms & Hymns, sung at the Parish Church of Brighthelmston. This contained ninety-three tunes, set to the New Version, of which no less than seventy-eight were composed by the assiduous compiler himself. Many of these are of great merit, written in four parts with a certain feeling of dignity and repose not found in similar compositions of the period. More than half of the tunes are in triple time. Cooke was born in Bosham, Sussex, where he was buried in 1827 (see p. 56).

An organist of Chichester Cathedral, T. Bennett, 1817–1848, published a book of psalm and hymn-tunes by well-known composers, as well as by himself, and in loyalty to his county he re-named many of the tunes after the villages in the neighbourhood. Thus there is Littlehampton by Dr. Croft, Lavant by Battishill, Woolbeding by Gluck, Fittleworth by Mozart, Aldwick by Beethoven!

Most of these old books had title-pages and prefaces of a somewhat boastful nature that more than hinted that each compiler thought his own particular work was much better than any of its forerunners. Thus Psalmody Improved, or a somewhat similar phrase, was a fairly common title, and a few extracts from prefaces will show how the compilers deemed they had fulfilled the promise of such titles.

Here is an example from A Collection of Psalms . . . sung at Selsey Church:—

"It has been compiled from the works of the most pious and approved authors, and, it is hoped, is free from most of the objections which unfortunately attach to many similar collections, viz. of being deficient in metrical harmony and arrangement, poor in expression, and frequently not exempt from doctrinal error. Thus an opportunity is now afforded to every member of the Congregation of joining in a portion of the service which has been hitherto grievously neglected or abused: and they are all hereby earnestly requested to unite the efforts of their voices (however feeble and however uncultivated) to swell the loud and rich note of praise and thanksgiving to God—that so the offering may, to the best of their power, be rendered acceptable to Him, and worthy the creature from whom it emanates."

An undated book of the late eighteenth century was The Psalmists' New Companion Set forth and corrected by Abraham Adams, at Shoreham in Kent, with this preface:—

"I need not acquaint you with the Original and Ancientness of Music, and of its divine Use, since we have the Testimony of it in Holy Scripture both for Antiquity and Administration in the Church: We cannot doubt of the Inventor thereof, since Holy Writ has directed us to Jubal. . . .



FACSIMILE OF TUNE FROM N. COOKE'S Collection of Psalms and Hymns.

"How ravishing and delightful is this Exercise when performed with Skill in a becoming Manner! and how much unlike itself when made up with harsh and disagreeable Sounds. The Design of this Undertaking is to better and improve this excellent and useful Part of our Service, to keep up an Uniformity in our Parish churches, and bring them as much as may be to imitate their Mother-Churches the Cathedrals; so that almost all the Tunes are in four Parts, being reduced to their proper Keys, and so well adapted to the Words, that all who are capable of Harmony may join in this Consort; and young Men and Maidens, old Men and Children may praise the Name of the Lord.

"This will be a means to add to the Church daily and make us glad to go into the House of the Lord: it will ravish our Hearts with the Harmony of God's Love and Goodness, whilst our Voices are joined in his Praises; that having perfectly learned our Parts here, we may at last come to join with the Heavenly Chorus, and sing Hallelujahs to all Eternity."

One of the most amusing and boastful bears this title:

"PSALMODY IMPROVED

Containing upwards of seventy Portions of the Psalms of David, and thirteen HYMNS for Particular Occasions, adapted to the best Old and Modern Melodies and some few never before published with a short Interlude adapted to each. Also TE DEUM, JUBILATE DEO, CANTATE DOMINO, and DEUS MISEREATUR.

(Composed by the Editor)

"The whole so adapted as to express in Music the Accent syllabic Quantity &c. of the Words.

The Words are selected chiefly from the version of Tate & Brady with Amendments by John Gresham, Master of the School at Dunstable, and the MUSIC, selected, adapted and composed by

WILLIAM GRESHAM OF DUNSTABLE

Price 8s.

Printed for the EDITOR, and sold by PRESTON 97 Strand, London."

This verbose title seems to imply that the Te Deum, Jubilate Deo, etc., were composed by Mr. Gresham and not by King David and

others, as one is accustomed to believe.

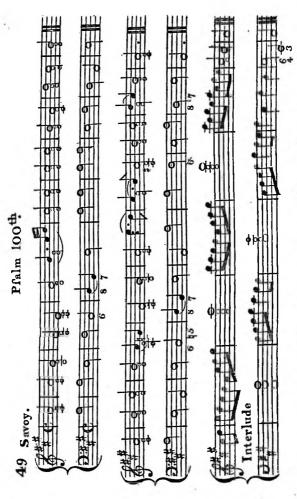
There is a long "Introduction" to Gresham's book of a boastful nature, though the work itself hardly justifies the self-praise. Gresham's interludes may "not seem impertinent" to him, nor neglections interludes may "not seem impertinent" to him, nor neglections interludes may "not seem impertinent" to him, nor perhaps to those who first heard them; but we wonder what the effect would be on a modern congregation if any of them were intruded into a hymn-tune now. Truly, some progress has been made in church music during the last 100 years, in spite of the general adverse criticism of it so prevalent at the present time. One of the most dreadful of these interludes, in Psalmody Improved, is introduced into the "Old 100th"; and both the character of Gresham's "improvement" to the old tunes and the effect of the interludes themselves may be gathered from the reproduction of that tune herein (see p. 58).

The Introduction to Psalmody Improved makes good reading and

is here quoted at some length:-

"ON THE WORDS.

"The Words are taken from the Version of Tate & Brady with a few alterations; of which the design, in some instances is to improve the Poetry; in others, to give a Sense nearer to the Prose, or adjust the Words the better to the Music. . . .



FACSIMILE OF OLD IOOTH FROM GRESHAM'S Psalmody Improved.

"In this selection of Words, the personal pronouns are sometimes made plural by substituting We for I, Our for My, a change apparently more adapted to a Congregation of people. For these, and similar reasons, it is hoped the alterations in the Words will not be thought unnecessary or improper.

ON THE MUSIC.

"As I have before observed, that this Work is intended to promote general singing in Public Worship, then, supposing the plan to be admitted as consistent with propriety, every thing that tends in any degree to obstruct its general reception, should be removed; for this reason I consider Fugues, Anthems and Solos to be improper; for, though a capitai Fugue, as an instrumental piece of Sacred Music, has undoubtedly a very fine effect, yet I cannot think the effect good when performed as a vocal piece of music, in which the Words are repeated many times, and the singers are pronouncing different Words in different parts at the same time-as Dr. Burney says- With the clamour of ill-bred disputants, who are talking all at once,' till the sense of the Sacred Words is entirely sung away, and the performance rendered more like vain babbling, or a confusion of tongues, than an act of Devotion. In many country Churches, I have frequently heard some of the worst portions of the Psalms, from Sternhold & Hopkins' version, sung in ill-constructed Fugues, replete with disallowances or false concords, with the words so broken and half-words repeated and jumbled together in a manner seemingly more calculated to raise the idea of a Catch Club, than to inspire Devotion. . . . If the words are to be sung and repeated until the sense be lost, it would be equally proper and less profane to sing Sol la mi fa, &c.

I cannot here refrain from giving an instance of this kind of performance . . . from the 23rd Psalm old version, which was, twelve years ago, a very great favourite with a few ignorant singers at a certain church in Bedfordshire, and which has lately been revived, during the intermission of the Organ, in lieu of Mr. Addison's fine translation of that Psalm. The words are repeated, and the pauses made, in the following manner: Thou will fill full my cup, and thou—anointed bast my bead, anointed

bast my head, anointed-nointed bast my head.

The tunes which I have selected and composed for this work, will, I hope, be found expressive of the Words to which they are adapted. I likewise think that singing in two parts, Treble or Tenor, and Bass, is preferable to four parts attempted and not well performed. The usual manner of executing the four parts in country Churches is very singular; for the Air, or principal Part, is uniformly sung by Tenor Voices, and the other two Parts, which should be Accompaniments to the Air and Bass, are sung by Treble and Counter-Tenor Voices; and are thereby frequently rendered too predominant; and, for want of sufficient Voices, the Treble is often omitted, and the Counter made completely to overpower the Air, by being played on a Clarinet or two, and in the Treble Octave.

OF THE PERFORMANCE OF SACRED MUSIC

"... The Interludes here introduced are very short, that they may not seem impertinent; but give a respite to the Voices, between the Verses,

without interrupting the Sense, which must be the intention of Interludes, and should therefore be omitted where the Sense of the Verse is incomplete."

Instructions as to the rendering of the Psalms are given in Psalmody Improved in an amusingly direct manner, thus: Cheerful but not too fast, Loud and not very slow, Supplicating, Loud and Majestic, Slow and Tenderly, Slow and Solemn.

Short interludes, or "symphonies" as they are called, occur also in the psalmody used at the chapel of the Foundling Hospital, published 1774. These are not so long as Gresham's, but are equally trivial and occur in the middle of verses, as well as between verses.

They must have been exasperating.

A book that contained "a greater variety than any other extant, forming a publication of near Three hundred tunes " was compiled about 1790 by Edward Miller, Mus.Doc., who composed over fifty of them; they were specially for Dr. Watts' psalms and hymns. In the Introduction is this instructive (!) passage: "Different kinds of voices, seem to require a different mode of expression. Thus the treble requires delicacy, with the use of the sostenuto, apogiatura, and a good shake. The counter tenor, sweetness and subordination. The tenor should be flowing, full and energetic; and the bass possess gravity, solidity and bold expression." (Presumably Dr. Miller had met with some altos of a rather wayward frame of mind; nowadays the insubordination usually comes from the junior trebles 1)

Another book has an excellent set of rules which throw an interesting sidelight on the customs of the day :- Psalms and Hymns for the use of Petworth Church Principally selected and adapted by the late Rev. C. Dunster, A.M., Rector of that Parish.

"THE RULES.

The following Rules are recommended to be observed, in the manner of performing the Psalmody.

1. The Clerk to give out the Psalm, distinctly, in his natural tone of

2. The Organ, or Instrumental Band, to play the tune over once;

the last note of which will be the key, or pitch note. 3. The Clerk then to give out the first line of the Psalm in the key note.

4. Then the Congregation all standing up * to sing the Psalm, within the compass of everyone's voice; and, where there is no Organ, without any instrumental accompaniment, except that of the Violoncello, and of some one other instrument, when it may be found necessary to regulate the voices of the boys.

5. All persons who can sing, are desired to join in the Psalm; singing in unison, unless well skilled in music, so as ably to take another part.

"By the observation of these Rules, it is presumed the Psalms may be easily sung by the whole Congregation in such a manner as to render them a most pleasing, affecting and edifying part of the Service."

"* This becoming custom is now so general that it is needless to press it; but, it may be here observed, that a large Congregation rising all at once, on the opening of a fine Psalm, and the greater part of them joining devoutly in the Psalmody, has a singularly powerful and influencing

The Rev. C. Dunster was rector of Petworth from 1789 to 1816. The compilers of most of the old psalmodies and hymnodies had a liking for the robust and rhythmical tunes in triple time. In nine such books, published between 1750 and 1820, out of a total of 840 tunes there were 389 in triple time (46 per cent.); in the first 280 tunes in each of the three best-known modern hymn-books (840 in all, excluding plainsong) those in triple time number only 193 (23 per cent.). In the first edition of Hymns Ancient and Modern published in 1861, there are 275 tunes of which only fourteen are in triple time (a little over 5 per cent.); all the others in each case are in quadruple or duple time.

Another feature of the old books was the absence of Amen. This began to be used about 1860 and was in vogue until recent years, when it has again been omitted, or only placed after hymns

ending with a doxology.

What was called "lining out" was an almost universal custom in the churches during our special period. The rural populace was illiterate and books were rather expensive, so those who wished to join in the singing could only do so by learning the words by heart, or by having each line, or a whole verse, read out by the parson or clerk before it was sung. It must have been a tedious process, but references to the custom show that it existed for well over 100 years and in places survived into the nineteenth century. A writer named Durel, in 1662, stated that "[lining out] is a custom generally used in most if not all parish churches of this kingdom."

Bishop Gibson, 1724, recommends the custom so that the people may be able to learn some of the Psalms by heart and to sing them to five or six of the plainest and best-known tunes in a decent,

regular and uniform manner."

Six years later, however, James Leman in A New Method of Learning Psalm Times reprobates the custom as being "a hindrance to the people to remember the tunes, because they having sung the line out are so intent upon what the Clerk is going next to deliver that they in great measure forget the preceding part of the tune. If this old method could once be laid aside . . . the people would not only learn the tunes better but would also sing the Psalms with more understanding and devotion than is commonly done."

William Riley, in Parochial Music Corrected, 1762, condemns lining-out as "it makes the Clerk lose the pitch and sometimes the tune, spoils the sense of the words, protracts the service and renders the people's hymn-books useless."

A typical collection is Evisan's A Compleat Book of Psalmody,

1750; similar copies of which were used in Bosham and Lindfield Churches. The former owners of the Bosham book adorned it with their autographs in an interesting manner; thus:—

"James Wossil His book march y' 27 in the yeare of 1757.

James Wossil His Book,
God give him grace therein to look,
But not to look but understand
That larning is better than house and land;
When land is gone and munny spent,
Then larning is most excellent."

" John Caplin his Book 1791 Harting, Sussex.

John Caplin His Hand and Pen, He will be good But God no when."

"Thomas Welch 1796."
"Elisabeth Welch, Bosham."

instruments as well.

The Welch family lived in the same house in Bosham from father to son for 270 years. They were noted musicians of former days. The last member of the family in direct line died in February 1923.

Besides the printed books most of the bands and singers had manuscripts of their own making. These were generally excellent; they were neatly written, notes were well-formed and mistakes rare. In some cases the pages were adorned with simple but effective zig-zag lines, dots and scroll-work, betokening a labour of love as well as of necessity.

These manuscripts were indeed a necessity to our forefathers, owing to the plain fact that the cost of printed music-books was practically prohibitive to the village choirman. Each man found it more economical, and far more interesting, to make his own copy; and in most cases this book became a cherished and well-used possession for the remainder of the owner's life.

Occasionally, of course, the books, both printed and manuscript, were supplied by the churchwardens and belonged to them, but more often the individual musicians provided their own music and

Frequently the old manuscript books were "begun" at both ends, to use an Irishism, the psalm-tunes being written at one end and the anthems at the other, the book having been turned upside-down for the latter purpose. Each tune had its own special name or title, by which it became generally known. No doubt this universal custom of naming tunes, which was first adopted in a printed book by Ravenscroft in his Psalmody issued in 1621, owed its origin to the large number and variety of tune-books that were written or published early in the seventeenth century, no two of them being quite alike as to pagination or the order in which the tunes occurred.

In referring to any particular tune the choirmen found it more convenient to indicate it by name rather than by number or page; and the old musicians always continued to speak of tunes by name, in preference to number, long after the widespread adoption of the two or three best-known modern hymn-books had rendered

numbers more feasible.

A very remarkable manuscript book is one that bears the name and date of its first owner—"Francis Belt, Norton, His Book, January 26, Anno Domini 1777." This Norton is no doubt in Gloucestershire, for it passed into the possession of William Smith who was parish clerk of Saintbury in that county, from 1828 to 1901, when he resigned. He died in 1904, and the book was kept by his daughter, Mrs. Miles, who gave it to me in 1938. The book has 458 pages of music, psalm and hymn-tunes and anthems, most of them very well written. Imagine the trouble that the worthy owners of it must have taken to produce such a volume—and their pride in the work when using it on Sundays! It certainly shows a keenness for church music beyond praise.

Down to the middle of the nineteenth century the melodies of all the church-tunes were sung by the tenor voices, not by the treble as at the present time. This was a survival of the old custom of giving the plainsong to the tenor when the ecclesiastical tones were first issued in four parts. An interesting allusion to this custom occurs in a metrical version of the Psalms by Archbishop Parker and printed for private circulation about 1557. Eight tunes only [the "tones"] were issued with this book and prefixed to them is this instruction: "The Tenor of these partes be for the people when they will syng alone, the other partes put for the greater queers [choirs], or to such as will syng or play them privately."

In most of the tune-books of the period under survey, where the words were printed between the staves of the music, they were placed under the tenor stave alone, thus indicating which was the

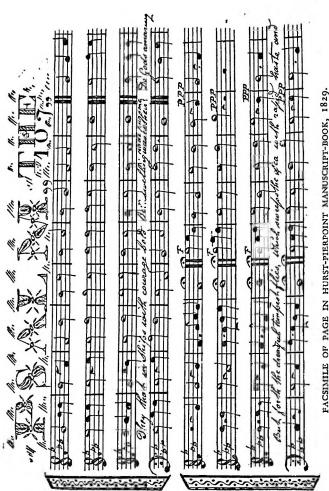
most important part of the tune.

The words of the Psalms were frequently "mangled and mauled" in a most absurd way to make them fit the tunes. Long runs in the music would have single syllables, repeated several times, to make them suit, however ridiculous the effect. In the Dunstable book the words of one psalm ran thus: " Of his great lib, of his great lib, of his great liberality."

Another book has this (so I have been informed), "Oh, catch the

flee, Oh, catch the flee, Oh, catch the fleeting hour.

In Volume 52 of Sussex Archaeological Collections the Hon. Terence Bourke relates " an amusing story that I had often heard my mother, the late Lady Mayo, tell of Sussex church music of eighty years ago. My mother was a daughter of the first Lord Leconfield, and her memory went back as far as the early thirties of the last She used to say she remembered singing in Church every Sunday a version of the Psalms to the accompaniment of a fiddle, a



FACSIMILE OF PAGE IN HURST-PIERPOINT MANUSCRIPT-BOOK, 1829.

flute and a trombone. A sentence, a word, or a syllable used to be reiterated to fit in with the tune. She and her brothers used to look forward to one particular sentence which was always sung as follows :- " My poor pol, My poor pol, My poor polluted heart."

Perhaps the most ludicrous of all these repetitions was that of a London chapel where the congregation were physically and senti-

mentally edified in this manner:-

Oh take thy mourning pil., Oh take thy mourning pil., Oh take thy mourning pilgrim home I

The introduction to Rippon's Tune-book states:-

· · · "Repeated inquiries have been made for tunes suited to many of the Hymns, especially such as are in peculiar metres. These inquiries have been partly answered, sometimes by mentioning one Author, and then another; but the purchase and use of several Tune Books being found inconvenient, it was thought that One Volume might be published which should remedy this evil, contain a greater variety than any other book extant—and be calculated to unite London and the Country in singing."

This laudable effort to provide unity between the capital of England and the provinces can scarcely have had the desired effect, as may be judged from the contemporary and later prefaces of other tune-books, which continued to bemoan the low state of church

music long after Rippon's time.

A familiar survival of the repetitions of words and phrases, though not of the same witless nature, occurs in most modern hymnbooks in such hymns as: "O come, all ye faithful," "Lo! He comes," and "All hail the power," wherein repeats are made at the

end of each verse.

Very often the lengthy phrases of music in some of the too elaborate tunes had short words or syllables allotted to them, and the printers often adopted quaint methods of dividing the letters of syllables to fit the music. A specimen tune from Evisan's Compleat Book of Psalmody, published in 1750, is reproduced on pp. 46, 47, and it will be seen that the word "thy" is thus printed "th-y." Other instances in the same book are "heal—th," "shou—ld,"

"b—e" "th—em," "ma—g—ni—fy," "yo—u," "t—o."

The tune from Evisan's book is a fair example of many of the psalm-tunes of the past, both in its style and in the way in which the lines of the verses are divided between the four parts of the choir, with the last line or two repeated together. Not all the tunes were thus spread out, but when they were the opening line was almost

invariably given out by the tenor or bass.

Allusion has already been made to the common custom of limiting the number of verses of a psalm or hymn to four only. It was apparently a matter of indifference whether the fourth verse made a satisfactory termination or not. Many of the old psalmodies recognised the custom by printing four verses of each psalm, and no more.

The Old or New Version of the Psalms was generally bound in with the copies of the Book of Common Prayer issued in the seventeenth, eighteenth and early part of nineteenth centuries. One such Prayer Book, dated 1716, formerly used in Selsey is full of quaint illustrations, depicting scenes of the Gospels, etc. One picture, in the Form of Thanksgiving for James I's deliverance from Gunpowder Plot, shows Guy Fawkes with his lantern going to the Houses of Parliament, while the Eye of God looks down on him from the clouds. Another woodcut shows David composing the

Psalms to very modern-looking music.

In these days of rush and hurry, of invention and discovery, of machinery and radio, it is difficult to imagine what life was like a century or two ago, but with the stories of the Old Church Gallery Minstrels handed down by their descendants through several generations, and with the aid of old books and prints it is not beyond one's powers to reconstruct the scene of a church service in the country between 1660 and 1860. Picture the old folk in smocks and poke-bonnets, trudging over dusty or muddy roads, some carrying big Bibles and prayer-books, others their musical instruments; then the homely greetings in the churchyard and the settling down on hard seats, in high-back pews devoid of all comfort. Hear the tuning of the viols, the soft sounding of flutes and other wind instruments to test them; muttered but audible instructions of the leader. After the third Collect the old parish clerk (one cannot imagine a young clerk somehow) giving out the Psalm in a nasal sing-song voice: "Let us sing to the praise and glory of God Psalm No. 100!" Then the band of "musickers" playing over the appointed tune; the whole congregation standing up and turning to the gallery "to face the music," but not venturing to join in it. After a few more prayers a sermon perhaps an hour long, possibly an anthem before it, shuffling of feet in the gallery, some snores in the pews. Then the dismissal; the comments on the way home, probably some remarks about the cold church, or praise of the learned but ill-understood sermon.

We can smile at the unconscious humour of the old "musickers," we can lament over their irreverence, and wonder whether the performance of simple peasants on inferior instruments was as edifying as the playing of our modern musicians on well-tuned organs; but it is certainly sad to realise that the old pious custom of most of our forefathers in attending their church regularly has died. And it is deeply to be regretted that the Old Church Gallery Minstrels, with their enthusiastic zeal, their patience in rehearsing, their pride in performing, and their pains and interest in their labour of love,

have disappeared from our churches.

APPENDIX I

LIST OF PLACES WHICH HAD CHURCH BANDS OR BARREL-ORGANS BETWEEN 1660 AND 1860.

$B_{\cdot} = band$

Bedfordshire

Caddington. B.
Eaton Bray. B.
Kensworth. B.
Luton. BO.
Ravensdon. B.
Shillington. B.

Berkshire

Barkham. BO. Besselsleigh. B. Crowmarsh. B. Goring. B. Northbourne. B. Welford. B.

Buckinghamshire

Bow Brickhill, B. Hawbridge, B. Milton Keyttes, B. Quainton, B. Tyringham, B.

Cambridge

Balsham. B, BO. Meldreth. BO. Wisbech. B.

Cheshire

Bunbury. B. Farndon. B. Shotwick. B.

Cornwall

Baldhu. B. Camborne. BO. Probus. BO. St. Feock. B. Sennen. B.

BO. = barrel-organ

Cumberland

Water Millock. B.

Derbyshire

Ashover. B.
Church Broughton. B.
Hartshorne. B.
Hayfield. B.
Marston-on-Dove. B.
Youlgrave. B.

Devoushire

Belstone. B.
Brent Tor. B.
Chivelstone. BO.
Clawton. B, BO.
Fremington. B.
Gettysham. B.
Kenn. B.
Sidbury. B.
Spreyton. BO.
Tavistock. B.
Thurlestone. B.
Tiverton. B.

Dorset

Beaminster. В. Bere Regis. B. BO. Botherhampton. Cattistock. B. Chettle. B. Chilfrome. B. Lychett Matravers. B, BO. Moordown. B. Puddletown. B, BO. Reforme. BO. Steeple. BO. В. Swanage. Symondsbury. B. Upminster. BO. Upway. B. Winterbourne Abbas.

Winterbourne Martin. B. Winterbourne Steepleton. B.

Essex

Barnston. B. Battisford. B. Bocking. B. Chelmsford. B. Chipping Ongar. B. Danbury. B. Faulkbourne. BO. Fingringhoe. B. Great Leighs. B, BO. Greenstead. B. Hatfield Peverel. B. Hutton. B. Ingrave. B. Langdon Hills. B. Layer-de-la-Haye. BO. Navestock. B. Prittlewell. B. Standon Massey. B, BO. Upminster. BO. Vange. B. White Roding. B. Wickham Bishops. BO. Widford. B. Wiston, BO.

Gloucestershire

Ampney Crucis. B.
Broughton. B.
Chedworth. B.
Hindlip. B.
Little Rissington. B.
Rockhampton. B.
Saintbury. B.

Hampshire

Avington. BO. Boldre. B, BO. East Dean. B. Farnborough. B. Lymington. B. Milford-on-Sea. B. Otterbourne. B. Romsey. B. Rotherwick. B. Tadley. B. Yateley. B, BO.

Hertfordsbire

Aldbury. B.
Aldenham. BO.
Great Gaddesden. B, BO.
Hatfield. B.
Hitchin. B.
Hunsdon. BO.
Lacombe. BO.
Stocking Pelham. BO.
Walden. B, BO.
Watford. BO.
Welwyn. B.
Whitwell. B.

Kent

Barham. B, BO.
Canterbury, St. Stephen's. B.
Chiddingstone. B.
Chittenden. B.
Ickham. B.
Kennington. B.
Lamberhurst. B.
Penshurst. B.
Sellinge. B.
Shadoxhurst. B.
Sutton. BO.
Trottescliffe. B.
Willesborough. BO.
Wye. B.

Lancashire

Melling. B. Overton. B.

Leicestershire

Melton Mowbray. B.

Lincolnshire

Bassingham. B.
Eaton. B.
Lincoln: St. Peter. B.
Norfolk

Barsham. B.
Bressingham. BO.
Gressenhall. B.
Hempstead-by-Holt. B.
Hoveton. BO.
Mattishall. B.
Weston. B.
Witton. BO.
Wood Rising. BO.

Northamptonshire

Courteenhall. B. Melton Mowbray. B. Northampton, St. Giles. B. Rushton. B.

Nottinghamshire

East Drayton. B.
East Leake. B.
Dunham. B.
Gamston. B.
Ordsall. B.
Stapleford. B.
West Retford. B.
Winkburn. B.

Oxfordshire

Brightwell Baldwin. BO Fringford. B. Goring-on-Thames. B. Hampton Gay. BO. Kencot. B. North Leigh. B. Oxford, St. Giles. BO. Shirburn. BO.

Rutland

Belton. BO. Preston. B. Wardley. BO.

Shropshire

Cardiston. BO. Cockshutt. B. Eyton. BO.

Somerset

Chew Stoke. BO.
East Pennard. B.
Edington. B.
Holcombe. B.
Houndstone. B.
Kelstone. B.
Luccombe. B.
Muchelney. BO.
Pilton. B
Selworthy. B.
Sparkford. B.
Yatton. B.

Staffordshire

Aldrich. BO.

Gnossall. B. Ipstones. B. Shareshill. B.

Suffolk

Cavendish. B. Shelland. BO. Wissington. BO.

Surrey

Horne. B. Woldingham. B.

Sussex

Albourne. BO. Aldingbourne. Alfriston. B. Amberley. B. Angmering. B, BO. Apuldram. B. Ashurst. B. Balcombe. В. Barcombe. Beeding, Upper. B. Bersted. BO. Berwick. B, BO. Bignor. B. В. Billingshurst. Birdham. B. Bishopstone. BO. Bolney. B. Bosham. B. Boxgrove. B, BO. Brightling. B, BO. Broadwater. Buxted. B, BO. Catsfield. B. Chailey. B. Chiddingly. B, BO. В. Clymping. Cocking. B. Crowhurst. BO. Cuckfield. Danehill, B. Donnington. B. B. BO. Eastergate. B. BO. Falmer. B, BO. Felpham. B. BO. Fernhurst. B, BO. Ferring. Findon. В.

Firle. BO. Fishbourne, New. B. Fittleworth. BO. Fletching. B. Funtington. BO. Glynde. B. Goring. B. Grinstead, East. B. Grinstead, West. B, BO. Guestling. B, BO. Hailsham. B. Hartfield. BO. Harting. B, BO. Heathfield. B. Hellingly. B. Henfield. B, BO. Hoathly, East. B. Hollington. B. Hooe. B. Horsham. Ifield. BO. Jevington. BO. Lavant, East. B. Lewes, Southover. BO. Lindfield. B. Lodsworth. B. Lurgashall. B. Mayfield. B. Mundham. B. Newick. B. Ninfield. B. North Chapel. BO. Northiam. B. Nuthurst. B. Oving. BO. Pagham. BO. Parham. BO. Piddinghoe. BO. Poling. B. Pulborough. BO. Ringmer. B. Roffey. B. Rogate. B, BO. Rotherfield. BO. Rustington. B. Rye. B, BO. Salehurst. B, BO. Selham, B. Selsey, B. Sennicotts, BO. Shermanbury. B. Shipley. BO.

Sidlesham. B. Singleton. B, BO. Stanmer. BO. Stedham. B. Steyning. BO. Stopham. BO. Sutton. B. Tangmere. BO. Tarring, West. Thakeham. BO. Twineham, B. Udimore. BO. Wadhurst. B, BO. Waldron. B. Wannock. BO. Warbleton. BO. Warnham. B. Westbourne. B. Westhampnett. B. Willingdon. B, BO. Wilmington. B. Winchelsea. B, BO. Withyham. В. Wisborough Green. B. Wittering, East. B. Wittering, West. B. Woodmancote. B. Worth. B. В. Yapton. Warwickshire Berkswell. Brailes.

Compton Wynyates. BO.

Wiltsbire Devizes. B. Lyddington. BO. Manningford. B. Purton. B. Quemerford. B.

Seend. B. Worcestershire Evesham. B.

Yorkshire Dronfield. B. Giggleswick. B. Northallerton. B, BO. Sheffield. В.

Isle of Wight Kingston. B. Shorwell.

As will be seen from this list, Sussex seems to have had the greatest number of bands and barrel-organs of all the counties, but this is almost certainly not the case. It is only because the Author of this book lived in Sussex and has made special efforts to obtain as much information as possible about that county that it has such a long list. There can be no doubt that the great majority of country churches all over England had bands or barrel-organs, and probably Yorkshire, Lincolnshire and Norfolk had more than Sussex. It is of interest that thirty-three counties have supplied some information on the subject.

The List of Places that issued special psalmodies and hymn-books also apparently shows Sussex as having the greatest number, but the same

reason as appears above is the cause.

APPENDIX II

LIST OF PLACES AND CHURCHES

for which special psalmodies and hymn-books were published, under their counties, with dates. This list does not contain all the places in England that had such books, but only those that have come within the Author's knowledge. Most of them may be seen (by permission) at the reading-room of the British Museum.

Bedfordshire: Cardington 1786, Dunstable c. 1780.

Berkshire: Reading, St. Mary's Church 1799, St. Laurence 1809, Maidenhead 1812, Sunninghill 1813.

Buckinghamshire: Stowe 1800, High Wycombe 1807.

Cambridgeshire: Cambridge, Trinity Church, c. 1820, Cambridge, 1795, Wisbech 1838.

Cheshire: Sandbach 1834.

Cornwall: Helston 1799, Truro 1860.

Cumberland: Carlisle 1840.

Derbyshire: Bakewell 1850, Chesterfield 1799, Derby 1822. Devonshire: Exeter 1696, Exeter 1698, Exeter 1779, Exeter 1848, Lyme Regis (published at Bridport) 1795, Okehampton 1843, Totnes 1797. Dorset: Lyme Regis 1795, Pimperne 1700, Weymouth, and Melcombe Regis 1801.

Durham: Houghton-le-Spring 1857.

Essex: Braintree 1815, Chelmsford 1802.

Glamorgan: Ewenny 1815.

Gloucestershire: Cheltenham 1809, Frampton Cotterell 1798.

Hertfordshire: Hertford, St. Andrew's 1828, Waltham Abbey 1826, Watford 1819.

Leicestershire: Leicester 1820.

Hampshire: Basingstoke 1849, Portsea 1815, Portsmouth 1748, Widley and Wymering 1825, Wonston 1837.

Herefordshire: Hereford 1887.

Kent: Chatham 1803, Greenwich 1811, Romney 1724, Shoreham late

eighteenth century, Shoreham 1780, Tunbridge Wells 1792.

Lancashire: Ardwick 1791, Bury 1836, Liverpool 1770, Liverpool, St. Nicholas 1818. Manchester 1791, Manchester, St. John's 1806, Preston 1808, Todmorden 1831, Warrington 1772, Warrington 1819. London: Wesley's 1754, Spring Garden 1830, "Miniature" 1778, St.

Pancras 1829, St. John's Wood 1839, St. George, Bloomsbury 1800, Foundling Hospital 1774, Keach's 1696, Dowing's 1727, Islington, 1851.

Lincolnshire: Boston 1800, Gainsborough 1817, Lincoln 1822.

Middlesex: Isleworth 1814.

Montgomeryshire: Welshpool 1818.

Norfolk: Holt 1828, Norwich 1818, Norwich 1825, Norwich 1844.

Northamptonshire: Peterborough Parish Church 1819 and 1838.

Northumberland: Haltwhistle 1812, Newcastle 1828, All Saint's 1781. Nottinghamshire: Nottingham 1777, 1819 and 1824, South Collingham

1810, Workson 1846.

Oxford: 1840.

Shropshire: Salop 1759, Shrewsbury 1807.

Somerset: Bath 1837, Bristol 1758, Bristol Schools 1818, Taunton 1816. Staffordshire: W. Barton's 1682, Handsworth 1826, Wolverhampton St. John's 1840.

Suffolk: Beccles 1826, Rougham 1862.

Surrey: Bentley 1838, Byfleet 1807.

Sussex: Beckley 1815, Berwick 1838, Brighton 1820, Broadwater 1842, Burwash 1790, Chichester 1814, Chichester's Charity Children 1761, Chichester Cathedral 1813, St. Paul's Church 1850, Eastbourne 1823, Hastings 1850 and 1861, Lewes 1802, Lewes Tabernacle 1833, St. Michael's Lewes 1811, Southover 1825, Providence Chapel 1858, Northiam 1828, Petworth 1800 and 1830, Rumboldswhyke 1810, Rye 1829, Seaford 1830, Selsey 1842, Warbleton 1828, Westbourne 1794, Worthing Chapel of Ease 1849.

Westmorland: Kendal 1757.

Wiltshire: Salisbury 1778, Warminster 1828. Worcestershire: Dudley 1796, Stourbridge 1780.

Yorkshire: Halifax 1837, Hull 1806, Knaresborough 1831, Leeds 1800, Leeds for Children 1819, Otley 1821, Pontefract 1840, Roundhay 1864, Scarborough 1810 and 1823, Sheffield 1807, 1826 and 1836, Sutton in the Forest 1809, Whitby 1819, York 1780, 1783 and 1817.

APPENDIX III

Miscellaneous psalmodies and hymn-books, compiled for general use, many of which were tune-books that used the Old or New Version for the words:—

Sternhold and Hopkins (Old Version) 1562, Alison's Psalmody (with cittern accompaniments) 1599, Wither's 1623, Slater's 1652, Ravenscroft's 1621, Myles Smyth's 1668, J. Playford's 1664, Benjamin Keach's 1691, Baxter's 1692, Tate and Brady (New Version) 1696, Isaac Watts 1707, Chetham's 1718, Richard Blackmore's 1721, J. Pattrick's 1724, Charles and John Wesley 1737, Tans'ur's 1738, Arnold's 1750, Evisan's 1750, James Merrick's 1765, Christopher Smart's 1765, Madan's Collection (the first Church hymn-book for general use) 1769, New Universal Psalmodist 1770, Psalmody in Miniature 1778, Addington's 1786, Rippon's 1791, Horne's 1828, Burgess 1832.

When Hymns Ancient and Modern appeared (of which sixty million copies were sold before 1904) most of the older books were ousted from our churches by it. About the same time the church bands began to die out, keyboard organs or harmoniums were introduced in their place, and a new kind of interest was taken in hymn-tunes and church music

generally.

Let us remember with honour all our pious forefathers, whether they were musical or poetical, who gave the best of their talents for the Praise and Glory of God, and for the help they rendered so willingly in the worship of the Church! May there be many among future generations to copy their zeal, their faith and simple piety. "Let everything that hath breath, praise the Lord!"

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